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# From Afghanistan 1979 to Afghanistan 2001: How Three Current High School History Textbooks Frame the Origins of the “War on Terror” Historical Analysis and Interviews with William Blum, Noam Chomsky and James Loewen

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From Afghanistan 1979 to Afghanistan 2001:  
How Three Current High School History Textbooks Frame the Origins of the “War on Terror”  
Historical Analysis  
and  
Interviews with William Blum, Noam Chomsky and James Loewen

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Masters of Science of Education

School of Education and Counseling Psychology

Dominican University of California

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## Signature Page

This thesis, written under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor and approved by the Chair of the Master's program, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science. The content and research are the work of the candidate alone.

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## Abstract

This work examines how three current eleventh grade U.S. high school history textbooks report on the origins of the “war on terror.” The researcher chose one textbook from each of the three leading publishing houses that supply the high school market: Holt McDougal, Prentice Hall, and McGraw-Hill. The scope of the researcher’s inquiry covers the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to the U.S. invasion in 2001. The nomenclature of the “war on terror,” Reagan’s “war on terror,” U.S. support for the Afghan Mujahideen, the Persian Gulf War, and the decision to invade Afghanistan are examined. Interviews with authors William Blum, James Loewen, and Noam Chomsky are also reported.

Findings indicate factual errors regarding historical events, as well as numerous omissions of historical context. Such errors and omissions may lead the high school reader to form inaccurate conclusions regarding current U.S. foreign policy regarding terrorism. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the instructor to devote considerable research to this topic so to supplement the inadequacies of the textbook.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

*September eleventh marks the date of an extraordinary event, one which would expose deceit and betrayal, the magnitude of which would lead to the longest war in America's two hundred and twenty-three year history. The event was not the thundering collapse in 2001 of the World Trade Center in New York, but the 1990 whir and click of a satellite camera a hundred miles above the sands of Saudi Arabia.*

Michael Galli July 11, 2013

On August 6, 1990, U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney met with the king of Saudi Arabia to discuss secret U.S. government satellite photos which purported to show a build-up of Iraqi troops on the Saudi's western border with Kuwait. The Iraqis had invaded Kuwait on August 2, and King Fahd was told they were now preparing an assault on his homeland. If the Saudi government did not allow U.S. troops into his kingdom soon, Fahd was told, an impending Iraqi invasion could not be stopped. The King consented, but only on the condition that the Americans would leave after the threat was neutralized (PBS, 1996, Oral History: Richard Cheney; Woodward, 1991, p. 270-271).

A month after Cheney's visit, one hundred thousand American troops were camped in the Saudi desert ready to repel the quarter of a million troops and 1,500 tanks the Pentagon claimed that the Iraqis had now amassed on the Saudi border (Heller, 1991). If the Iraqis had wanted to invade Saudi Arabia, why had they not rolled over the border a month earlier when they would have been virtually unopposed? General Schwarzkopf, U.S. commander of the troops in the Persian Gulf, had made the same inquiry to Chairman

of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell on August 14 (Schwarzkopf & Petre, 1992, p. 314).

After learning of a commercial satellite that had recently taken high resolution photos of the Saudi/Iraq border, five-time Pulitzer nominated journalist Jean Heller convinced her editor of The St. Petersburg Times to pay \$3,120 to acquire two prints (Heller, 1991; O’Kane, 2003). These incredible documents were purchased from Soyuz-Karta, a non-military organization specializing in satellite imagery for geological purposes. The first photo was of Saudi Arabia taken on September eleventh.

The second photo was of Kuwait taken two days later. Heller had both photos analyzed by two separate satellite image specialists, both of whom had security clearances. Neither analyst could locate the Iraqi tanks that the U.S. claimed posed a threat to Saudi Kingdom. They could see, however, an abundance of U.S. military aircraft on the ground at Saudi Arabia’s Dhahran airport (Heller, 1991).

Heller took her evidence to Dick Cheney’s spokesman Pete Williams, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, who had been with Cheney when he met King Fahd, and who so happened to be an acquaintance of hers. When Heller questioned Williams about the discrepancy, he replied that the government photos were correct. Heller asked to see the photos. She was denied. She asked Williams to make the photos available to the two specialists who had examined her images. Again, her request was denied.

Heller states that the government position on her inquiry, an inquiry that called their photos into question, was to just “trust us” (J. Heller, personal communication, October 10, 2012; Peterson, 2002, p. 2). Heller ran the story titled “Photos Don’t Show Buildup” in the January 6, 1991 edition of the *St. Petersburg Times*. It gained little notice.

Her editors submitted the story to the associated press. They refused to run it (al-Yassiri, 1996). According to John MacArthur, author of *Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War*, Pete Williams “discouraged ABC, CBS, and the Chicago Tribune from pursuing the satellite story” (MacArthur, 1994, p. 175).

Eleven days after the publication of Heller’s story, the Gulf war began. The Iraqi army was routed in 100 days. Eleven years later CNN would air an interview in which Osama bin Laden would state that his conflict with America would continue as long as the United States maintained a presence in Saudi Arabia (CNN, 2002). On the eleventh anniversary of the al-Qaida attack, Dick Cheney’s satellite photos remained a closely guarded state secret while Jean Heller’s remained un-refuted (J. Heller, personal communication, October 10, 2012).

It is tempting to speculate what would have happened had Heller’s story been picked up by the mass media. Would a pre-emptive truth have changed the course of history? President Bush would tell the American people that King Fahd “requested” American troops to be based in his country; not true (Bush, G.H.W., 1990; Cheney & Petre, 2011, p. 186; PBS, 1996, Oral History: Colin Powell; Powell & Persico, 1995, p. 464; Schwarzkopf & Petre, 1992, p. 301; Woodward, 1991, p. 241-273).

The Pentagon would claim that Iraq had mobilized a half million man army to invade Kuwait; not true (Peterson, 2002; Zimmerman, 2003). A current US history text would print that after the “Iraqi invaders looted Kuwait [they] then headed toward Saudi Arabia and its oil fields;” not true (Danzer, Klor de Alva, Krieger, Wilson, & Woloch, 2012, p. 853; Kellner, 1992, p. 1- 18). The basing of American forces in Saudi Arabia remains one of the most neglected bits of contextual information for understanding

America's "war on terror." To test this assertion one need only ask family, friends, any high school student that has completed an 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. history course, the following question: Why was Osama bin Laden so determined to strike out violently against the U.S.?

#### Statement of the Problem

On October 7, 2001 the United States government initiated the longest war in its history by ordering an aerial assault on targets within the nation of Afghanistan. Eleven years later, the aerial and ground war continues. In that time, public high schools have graduated over 28,000,000 students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2012). Many of these students leave the womb of high school as legal adults, and virtually all attain that status within a year.

As a nation, we confer upon these eighteen-year-olds the right to vote for leaders who steer the ship of state, as well as the right to join a military that serves that state. When it comes to the war in Afghanistan we must ask ourselves: Has the nation's public education system done enough to prepare these young citizens with the skills and information needed to speak with clear conviction, vote with clear purpose, and serve with a clear conscience?

At first glance, such a question may appear too abstract to quantify, but researchers are fortunate to have a reliable source within the public education system to measure; the high school history textbook. Do these texts aide – in the words of education secretary Arne Duncan – "in creating civically competent young people who make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good," or – in the words of the chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, James Leach – do they "imprison [their] thoughts in the

here and now ... [by] shutting [them] off from the wisdom and, likewise, the mistakes of others...?” (Duncan, 2011, para. 11, 12). If, indeed, high school history texts do the latter, than they can be viewed, as Romanowski (2009) argues, as “ideological and political weapons that shape...thinking” rather than foster inquiry (p. 290).

### Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to challenge the origin of the “war on terror” narrative delivered in three high school textbooks. One current eleventh grade U.S. history textbook was chosen from each of the three publishing houses that dominate the high school market: Holt McDougal’s 2012 *The Americans: Reconstruction To The 21st Century*; Prentice Hall’s 2013 *United States History: Modern America*; and McGraw Hill’s 2014 *United States History and Geography* (American Textbook Council, 2013). The scope of this textbook analysis covers the 1979 Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan to America’s 2001 invasion.

### Theoretical Rationale

As the United States government was in the throes of the Vietnam War, iconic journalist I.F. Stone wrote, “All governments lie, but disaster lies in wait for countries whose officials smoke the same hashish they give out” (Stone, 1967, p. 317). That same year, 1967, American dissident Noam Chomsky published his iconic essay *The Responsibility of Intellectuals*. Chomsky took aim at the cadre of academic mandarins who were willing apologists for the disastrous U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia, public intellectuals for whom “it is an article of faith that American motives are pure, and not subject to analysis” (Chomsky, 1967, para. 14). Eight years before America’s defeat, Chomsky wrote, “The deceit and distortion surrounding the American invasion of Vietnam

is by now so familiar that it has lost its power to shock” (para. 5). Hauntingly, thirty-eight years later, in an essay titled *Teaching About War in a Time of War*, professor Paul Atwood (2005) would write, “Of the stated rationales for war in Iraq not a single one has been verified. Of the stated purposes in Afghanistan none has succeeded”(p. 31).

Chomsky defines “intellectuals” as a “privileged minority” for whom “Western democracy provides the leisure, the facilities, and the training to seek the truth lying hidden behind the veil of distortion and misrepresentation, ideology and class interest, through which the events of current history are presented to us”(Chomsky 1967, para. 2). Does one need a Ph.D. to qualify as an intellectual? Certainly not. Do not teachers of high school history have “the facilities, and the training to seek the truth lying hidden behind the veil of distortion and misrepresentation?” Chomsky believes so, and so do I (N. Chomsky, personal communication, March, 22, 2013).

While Chomsky focused his scrutiny on the written works of Washington acolytes, I focus mine on the authors of the American high school history textbook. When it comes to this staple of our trade, one that is most often forced upon us, I would hope that I and my fellow teachers of high school history share a similar value, that as intellectuals it is our responsibility to “speak the truth and to expose lies” (Chomsky, 1967, para. 4). As our classrooms fill with the grandchildren of Vietnam veterans and the children of men and women who have either served or are serving in Afghanistan and Iraq, I ask the same thing of my fellow intellectuals that Chomsky asked of his forty-six years ago: “As for those of us who stood by in silence and apathy as this catastrophe slowly took shape over the past dozen years—on what page of history do we find our proper place?” (para. 3)

## Assumptions

Diversity is lacking in the narrative of the three textbooks examined. The textbooks contain contextual omissions for explaining the origins of the “war on terror” as well as factual errors. Students and teachers who rely on these textbooks for knowledge do not develop the critical analysis skills to challenge the textbooks’ national narrative.

## Background and Need

Romanowski (2009) examines nine top selling U.S. history textbooks used in American high schools to explore how the 9/11 narrative is constructed. His central question asks: “What knowledge is excluded from the discussion and how does this excluded knowledge shape textbooks’ portrayal of 9/11?” (p. 290). Background research on the events surrounding 9/11 lead Romanowski to developed five research questions through which to perform qualitative content analysis on the nine texts. The five questions are:

1. Why was the United States attacked?
2. What were U.S. reactions to the 9/11 attacks?
3. How is the invasion of Afghanistan portrayed in the textbooks?
4. What changes in American culture, government, and lifestyle are presented in these textbooks as resulting for the 9/11 attacks?
5. How are the controversies embedded in the war with Iraq presented?

Romanowski’s (2009) findings center on not what the textbooks say about 9/11, but on what they do not say. He writes that this is “because the omission of certain knowledge can allow particular foreign and domestic policies to be legitimized and can shape readers’ understandings and perspectives” (p. 291). On the question why the United States was



attacked, he finds a significant absence of discussion on the “terrorist’s motives.” Such an absence, Romanowski (2009) argues, “does little to develop students’ understanding of the United States, terrorism, and 9/11” (p. 292). On the question of U.S. reactions to 9/11, Romanowski (2009) finds that the textbooks focus on the groundswell of patriotism the attacks engendered, and that this “patriotism is viewed as an outstanding virtue that was targeted by the terrorists...” (p. 292). Missing is any discussion of the violence visited on members of the U.S. Muslim community. He asserts “[o]ne of the most valuable lessons that students can learn from 9/11 is how patriotism can be both a force of unity for a nation and a tool of oppression when coupled with fear” (p. 292). On the question of Afghanistan he finds that the texts present its invasion “as the first victory in the war on terror and as a quick, easy, and efficient military endeavor.

Absent is any discussion on the war’s impact on civilian society. “[W]ithout proper attention to the human element, the disastrous consequences of war and the invasion of Afghanistan in particular go unreported and unquestioned” (p. 293). The question on “changes in American culture, government, and lifestyle” is examined through Romanowski’s (2009) discussion of the Bush Doctrine, which, he argues, “is a landmark shift in American foreign policy...[that] abandons ...deterrence and containment in favor of a more aggressive, preemptive strategy” (p. 291, 294). He finds that all nine textbooks “are silent on this issue” (p. 295). Regarding the examination of how controversies are handled, including the Bush Doctrine, Romanowski (2009) examines a total of six. The five others are:

1. Why invade Iraq?
2. Where are the weapons of mass destruction?
3. The Downing Street memo.

4. Abu Ghraib.
5. The reconstruction of Iraq.

On the invasion Romanowski (2009) finds the textbooks present it as “a black on white issue” with little or no “opportunities for students to fully consider the controversy” (p. 293). On the lack of finding weapons of mass destruction he argues the texts “legitimize Bush’s misleading claim as a ‘miscalculation’ without presenting an explanation of how the president made such a blunder” (p. 293). Romanowski (2009) finds mention of the Downing Street memo in one of the nine examined texts, but argues that even here there is an omission of “outcomes and implications” (p. 293). Likewise only one textbook mentions Abu Ghraib, but “the description is limited to facts and placed within a framework of politics rather than ethics” (p. 294). One textbook looks at “controversy over bid contracts for...reconstruction,” but Romanowski (2009) finds that again, like other controversies examined, “the textbook frames the issue as if it had already been resolved” (p. 294).

Romanowski’s (2009) study presents a cogent framework through which to examine how a history text can either enhance or inhibit a student’s understanding and analysis of a global event. More importantly, considering that the particular event under study has led to America’s longest war, a conflict that continues today, one has to wonder to what degree such texts contribute to the war’s support, acceptance, or apathy.

## Chapter 2 Review of the Literature

### Introduction

This section examines the findings of seven scholarly works which analyze how historical narratives become codified and delivered to the high school student. Sean T. Gunn (2006) examines thirteen high school textbooks to learn how they reported on the Vietnam War. Paul Atwood (2005) explores the challenges of teaching about war in a time of war. Patricia Leavy (2007) examines how the media reinforced the government's 9/11 narrative. Linda Alkana (2011) discusses the results of eleven years of polling college students on their knowledge of 9/11. Diana Hess and Jeremy Stoddard (2011) analyze nine high school textbooks to understand how the 9/11 narrative is packaged for student consumption. Azadeh Osanloo (2011) looks at the difficulty of addressing 9/11 in civics and leadership classes. Mohammed Saleem and Michael Thomas (2011) review twelve high school history texts to analyze the reporting of 9/11 from a Muslim perspective.

*Masters of History: High School American History Textbooks and the Vietnam War, 1975-2005*  
by Sean T. Gunn

Gunn (2006) argues, “what we know (or think we know) about our country’s past plays a significant role in the ways we perceive, interpret, and judge its current actions and policies” (p.1). In light of the fact that a high school history text may be the “last history boo[k] Americans ever read,” Gunn believes that such books are “largely responsible for shaping the historical consciousness of the American people...” (p.3, 4). Alarmed by what he viewed as his “generation’s collective ignorance of the Vietnam disaster,” he examined thirteen American high school history books spanning the years 1975 to 2005 (p.3). Subjecting the texts to both a qualitative and quantitative analysis by which he evaluated how well each provided evidences

for its “point of view,” Gunn (2006) found their collective “inadequacies ...remarkably similar and consistent over” a thirty year period (p.7). For example, he argues that even though images of the Vietnam War conveyed a “reality” of conflict “more than any previous American war,” publishers choose to include “less controversial and less thought provoking pictures” denying the student “a true sense of what fighting in Vietnam was really like... “(p.19, 22).

Gunn (2006) also documented a virtual absence of primary sources in all thirteen texts. “Authors,” he writes, “cannot expect students to understand the subject matter or the nature of historical study in general by reading only secondary summations of events” (p. 27). None of the texts addressed Vietnam’s century’s long struggle for independence which, according to Gunn (2006), helps to explain why the Vietnamese people “were willing to endure seven years of brutal war with the United States at the cost of 3.8 million of their people” (p. 29). And while all thirteen texts reported the 58,000 American deaths suffered in Vietnam, only three discussed Vietnamese casualties and these “got the numbers very wrong” (p. 51).

Gunn (2006) also documented the textbooks’ failure to examine the importance of class and power in determining who would go to Vietnam and who would never return. “No congressmen,” writes Gunn, “felt the pain of losing a child to the war”(p. 37).

Gunn (2006) found the texts inadequate in covering the anti-war movement. He writes that by 1970, “two-thirds of the population opposed the war. This kind of popular uprising against the United States government deserves far more extensive treatment in textbooks than it has been allotted in the last thirty years” (p. 44).

Gunn (2006) argues that the texts either avoid or lightly touch upon the plague of “systematic lying” that was exposed by the Pentagon Papers (p. 46). “No textbook quoted Ellsberg,” Gunn (2006) writes, “or examined the reasons which drove him to risk his life in

prison to help bring the war to an end” (p. 48). Finally, most disturbing to Gunn (2006), is that none of the textbooks “encourage[ed] students to analyze and question the human cost of modern warfare” (p. 53).

#### Teaching About War in a Time of War by Paul Atwood

Atwood’s 2005 work, *Teaching War in a Time of War*, argues that “[n]othing is more important to a nation than war and peace for the obvious reason that warfare produces the scourges of killing, dying, and suffering” (p. 31). Because of inadequate instruction, Atwood believes that “most of what too many young people think they know about the wars of the nation's past is really myth” (p. 31). For example, as cited earlier, Atwood (2005) writes that “[o]f the stated rationales for war in Iraq not a single one has been verified. Of the stated purposes in Afghanistan none has succeeded” (p. 31).

Although to correct such deficiencies is of paramount importance, the endeavor can be a very dangerous one for teachers, for in challenging the status quo of past and present in a time of war, asserts Atwood (2005), one risks “the inevitable chaises of disloyalty and ‘unAmericanism’ that emerge when the central premises employed by elites for war are challenged” (p. 31). Even though one may place his or her tenure under threat, Atwood (2005) believes the educator must “not flinch from examining [the] legends of the past, [and] critiquing standard texts that convey them...” (p. 31). Atwood (2006) buoys his argument with a quote from the former commander of the United States Central Command in the Middle East, General Anthony Zinni. Speaking to a group of Military officers after his retirement, Zinni weighed in on George W. Bush’s Iraq war. “My contemporaries, our feelings and sensitivities were forged on the battlefields of Vietnam, where we heard the garbage and the lies, and we saw the sacrifice. I ask you, is it happening again?” (p. 36).

Writing 9/11 Memory: American Journalists and Special Interest Groups as Complicit Partners  
in 9/11 Political Appropriation by Patricia Leavy

Leavy (2007) looks at how the events of 9/11 were framed within the media to reinforce an agenda setting government narrative. “[T]he most relevant dimension of 9/11 reporting,” writes Leavy, “is the extent to which it reinforced and legitimized the ‘official story’ constructed by the Bush administration” (p. 86). She argues that this “official story” went on to create a “depoliticized collective memory” which castigates dissenting narratives as “unpatriotic.” According to Leavy (2007):

The ‘patriotism/terrorism’ and ‘good/evil’ narrative that framed the events of 9/11, and the corresponding absence of dissent (and arguably democracy), have had both global and domestic implications. The Iraq War is a result of embedding 9/11 narratives into a justification of war with Iraq (p. 95).

Leavy (2007) is careful to define the term “collective memory” and uses the following analytical framework to explain how media construction of this memory was accomplished: “1) the naming of the event, 2) the saturation coverage of the event, 3) the press's use of superlatives, and 4) the press's selective use of historical metaphors...”(p. 91).

What happened on 9/11? Nine Years of Polling College Undergraduates: "It was always just a fact that it happened" by Linda Alkana

In a survey of 824 undergraduate college students between 2001-2011, Alkana (2011) found that “very few ...learned about 9/11 in a history class,” and what they did know “reveal[ed] their ignorance and confusion” (p. 603). She argues that it is “our challenge as history teachers to recognize this gap in [students’] knowledge and to offer a remedy” (p. 612).

### 9/11 in the Curriculum: A Retrospective by Diana Hess and Jeremy Stoddard

Hess and Stoddard (2011) examined nine “bestselling textbooks...published between 2004–2006, and then [conducted] a subsample of three of the 2009–2010 editions of those same texts” to explore how the 9/11 and post 9/11 narrative is presented to U.S. high school students (p. 176). The authors found that while all the texts presented the events of 9/11 as a “defining event,” they fell short in discussing “who the terrorists were or the possible reasons for the attack” (p. 177). Hess and Stoddard (2011) also found “a lack of engagement with contested information or interpretations” (p. 178). They write, “Very little about the 9/11 attacks or the war on terror was cast as controversial”(p. 178). For example, while all but two of the textbooks studied “provided explicit, authoritative definitions of terrorism,” these definitions were not always consistent (p. 177). One definition used allowed for “state sponsored” terrorism while another excluded it. Saleem and Thomas (2011) argue that “[t]he very term ‘terrorism’ is a concept that mystifies rather than illuminates” (p. 15). Hess and Stoddard (2011) came to the conclusion that the texts under their review failed to provide the “detail” needed for students to “understand 9/11 and its aftermath while building conceptual understanding of powerful ideas [to engage] in deliberation about policy choices” (p. 178).

### Unburying Patriotism: Critical Lessons in Civics and Leadership Ten Years Later by Azadeh Osanloo

In his work Osanloo (2011) asked, “On what concepts and pedagogical practices should social studies and civic education be based post 9/11?” (p. 63). Osanloo (2011) argues for the need of future 9/11 curricula to address what he has termed the “‘informal lessons’” delivered through the media which “inculcate” students through informational narratives “embedded in topics such as patriotism, xenophobia, and jingoism” (p. 56). Osanloo (2011) writes:

While formal curriculum is being adapted to reflect historical shifts post 9/11, the collateral learning is shaping public minds and informing reactions and responses. This new patriotism, infused with xenophobia and blind nationalism has the potential to lead to an ethnocentric belief of infallibility and supremacy. These concepts can be used to subvert the democratic process and prevent the promotion of egalitarian beliefs. The time to address these conceptual and pedagogical concerns is now (p. 57).

The Reporting of the September 11th Terrorist Attacks in American Social Studies Textbooks: A Muslim Perspective by Mohammed Saleem and Michael Thomas

Saleem and Thomas (2011) ask, “Which ...memories [of 9/11] will become part of the official knowledge of September 11<sup>th</sup> in social studies textbooks?” (p. 15). They go on to explain:

The politics of official knowledge are the politics of tacit agreement or compromise where the compromises that are formed favor dominant or privileged groups (Apple, 2000). Therefore, the presentation of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks in social studies textbooks can become a powerful medium for setting the stage for future discourses and for creating official memories of the event while also serving as an appropriate starting point for drawing down the rhetoric of mutual hostility (p. 15).

Saleem and Thomas’ (2011) study of twelve high school history texts revealed a pattern of “propaganda making in order to profile the terrorist attacks of September 11th in a particular way,” mainly that of “identif[ing] Arabs, Islam and Muslims as the ‘other’ and associating terrorism with Islam” (p. 30).



The seven scholars discussed previously point out both the need and the dangers of challenging the “official story” of the pre and post 9/11 narrative. Gunn (2006) cites the absence of discussion of Vietnam’s long history struggling for independence from the texts he examined, thus depriving the reader from an opportunity to gain insight to why the Vietcong were willing to make the sacrifices they did. Hess and Stoddard (2011) demonstrate that the same lack of historical context occurs in their study regarding the background and motives of the 9/11 hijackers. Hess and Stoddard’s (2011) findings are confirmed by Alkana’s (2011) surveys. Atwood (2005), Leavy (2007), Osanloo (2011), and Saleem and Thomas (2011) illustrate the nature of transforming the history of 9/11 from fact to myth.

## Chapter 3 Method

### Introduction

It is understood that editors and authors of high school history textbooks are faced with topic and word constraints. The textbooks under review in this study are general surveys of twentieth century history, not exhaustive inquiries. Because of this limitation of scope, the historical narratives that make it to print are magnified interpretations of events. Such magnifications run the risk of presenting over simplistic and politically skewed historical narratives.

### Literature Review, Text Analysis, Historical Analysis, Interviews

This study conducted a literature review of seven scholars who examined how historical narratives become codified and delivered to the high school student. Such a review allowed the researcher to focus his text analysis on incorrect and/or missing historical data that contributes to politically skewed historical narratives. To remedy this defect, this work presents additional and/or competing historical narratives from numerous documented sources. To set the political/social context of the researcher's inquiry, three interviews with the renowned scholars Noam Chomsky, William Blum, and James Loewen were conducted by the researcher. These interviews open this work's findings presented in chapter four.

### Data Collection

The method of data collection and analysis from textbooks was an ex post facto, non-experimental mixed method inquiry of three current U.S. history textbooks each representing the top publishers for the high school market. It was based on a number of combined text analysis questions presented by Dr. Suresh Appavoo (2012). The questions are as follows:

Question 1: What is the content of the book?

Question 2: Is there evidence presented for the claims made in the textbook?

Question 3: Are their value claims?

Question 4: Is there any content that could be regarded as being controversial?

Question 5: Is cause and effect dealt with?

Question 6: Are there any statements of generalization?

#### Ethical Standards

This paper adheres to the ethical standards for the treatment of human subjects in researcher as proposed by the American Psychological Association (2010). Additionally this proposal was reviewed by my advisor and approved.

## Chapter 4 Findings

### Interview with William Blum

William Blum is a prolific critic of U.S. foreign policy. Noam Chomsky writes that Blum's book, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* is "Far and away the best book on the topic" (Blum, 2004, *Killing Hope*, Back cover). In 2006, Osama bin Laden quoted from Blum's book *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*. Bin Laden went on to recommend this work to the American public (Sunday Morning Herald, 2006). Mr. Blum was interviewed on February 19, 2013, in Washington D.C.

Galli: What is the most important thing that you would want to communicate to eleventh grade students about 9/11?

Blum: That the events of 9/11 were used by the American powers that be to wage a war on terror all over the Middle East and South Asia and to engage in a massive surveillance of American citizens at home.

Galli: Do you think these plans were waiting in the wings of government to be implemented, or do you think they just naturally progressed as a result of 9/11?

Blum: The U.S. foreign policy establishment are forever making contingency plans for every part of the world. This has been going on for decades and decades. They have literally files full of such plans. So some of these things in the war on terror would have been planned independent of 9/11 just waiting for a good excuse.

Galli: After reading your chapter in *Killing Hope* on Afghanistan, I surveyed the three current US history textbooks that I'm analyzing and discovered that they are virtually mute on anything that you talk about in that chapter regarding the Soviet incursion. There is certainly no context

for the Soviet incursion. There is no mention of the civil war that pitted fundamentalists against moderates. Carter's response to the incursion in the textbooks is limited to the Olympic boycott and the grain embargo. No mention of his support of the Mujahideen insurgency. That credit is solely given to Reagan. What do you think of this?

Blum: Carter and his national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski share a major blame for what happened in Afghanistan. Brzezinski has admitted that he wanted to provoke the Russians by supporting the forces in Afghanistan who were opposed to the Soviet occupation of the country and he wanted to provoke the Russians into an attack upon them. And, as he put it, he wanted to give the Russians a taste of their own Vietnam. He exceeded beyond his wildest thoughts. We're feeling the effects of that today. It's been a disaster for the people of Afghanistan and for the countless American soldiers who have suffered in Afghanistan. That's the legacy of Carter and Brzezinski.

Galli: Brzezinski made the statements regarding Vietnam in an interview given to a French magazine and, as I understand it, you translated that interview into English yourself.

Blum: Yes.

Galli: Is your translation the only translation that appears in the West, because I can't find any other translation of that article.

Blum: I don't know of any other, but once I did it maybe there was no need to.

Galli: Did he ever respond to it, Brzezinski?

Blum: For years and years he avoided talking about it, and then about a year or two ago he stated somewhere, in some context, that that wasn't what he said. After all these years, I mean, how can you believe the man? And he wasn't even specific. He didn't say this thing that was translated I did not say it. He just made a general statement. He can't be believed it at all.

Galli: Many textbooks state unequivocally that bin Laden was the mastermind behind 9/11, yet the FBI never charged him.

Blum: What we know that took place based on the official story, there's no roll there for bin Laden. The people that booked these flights and the people who took flying lessons, they didn't need bin Laden for that. We know that the planners met in Germany and Spain and in the US besides Afghanistan, so obviously bin Laden was not at all these meetings. So his role may not of been very significant.

Galli: So to use the phrase "mastermind" is inaccurate.

Blum: Well I imagine many Taliban leaders or many Islamics who were very much against US foreign policy, I'm sure the thought of carrying out attacks against the US of one kind or another we're very common. In fact we know some major plans, ones that were going to hijack 10 airplanes at once in the Philippines and fly them into all kinds of targets. There's a whole history behind that. We didn't need one person to think of this plan. The people with a serious grudge against US foreign policy have been dreaming of such things for decades. There may be good reason why the FBI hasn't charged bin Laden with anything because there's nothing concrete to pen on him or on him alone. Some of the leading men who have been arrested in connection with 9/11, they met in Germany for some time. Why didn't we attack Germany? Why did we attack Afghanistan? As I've written, you don't need too much to plan an operation like this. All you need is a room, maybe with a blackboard and some chairs, and you can sit down and plan this. You don't need a major organization or anyone like bin Laden. It was so simple.

Galli: So it wouldn't take a mastermind.

Blum: No. It would take a bunch of people who have a strong dislike of what the US government has done to the Middle East.

Galli: President Bush's use of the phrase “war on terror” went virtually unchallenged by the press and it's now an official uncontested chapter heading in many high school textbooks. What do you think about that the fact that the administration was able to coin the phrase and then build foreign policy off of it?

Blum: It's a victory for PR. I mean America is the land where public relations and advertising were invented and perfected. For us to do that, that's second nature. You have a good advertising slogan and you publicize it. The media loves such things and it's not surprising at all that its been picked up. Some people pointed out that terror is a tactic. How can you make war on a tactic? It's not a country or a land or a person. What is it we're fighting? If we kill people in Afghanistan today, how is that fighting against this tactic? We use murder to fight against a murderous tactic. It's very difficult to defend or even explain what it all means.

Galli: The Bush Administration advanced one flawed argument after another for justifying the invasion of Iraq in 2003. While the administration was forced to admit these flaws after the invasion, literate persons applying a basic critical analysis could effectively expose the flaws prior to the invasion. And yet the media and the administration were allowed by most Americans – the majority of who had a public education - to perpetuate these flaws. What is going on here? Is it a failure of public education to produce critical thinkers?

Blum: This leads to the point I emphasize the most in my writing. I, like many other people I know, for years and years had faced the same phenomenon, talking to an American, maybe a relation or a friend, about the things that the US government has done abroad which were not very nice and finding the person that you're talking to doesn't believe you, and or couldn't care less. And you wonder what's going on. I get letters from people all the time about this. Why are they so closed to hearing the other point of view? Are they just stupid? After years of thinking

about it, I finally realized that they're not stupid. It's because of a basic belief that is very deeply instilled in every American that when it comes to our foreign policy, when it comes to our dealings with other nations, we do mean well. Our intentions are honorable, if not noble, and as long as an American believes that it's like talking to a stone wall. He will not get beyond that. Sure we did some bad things that turned out not the way we planned and killed some people that we shouldn't have, but we meant well. Ever since that dawned on me some years ago that has been my main thrust in my writing and in my speaking, to knock down this stone wall of "meaning well." With your high school students, that's the main barrier you have to get beyond.

Galli: Where do you think this comes from?

Blum: Well it's not by chance.

Galli: Is it through public ed?

Blum: Public ed and the media, and their parents. I mean once you start the ball rolling, you have 20 million people pushing the same party line. How can a young child not be overwhelmed by that? It takes a very brave and talented young person to withstand all that pressure to believe the official party line.

Galli: Chomsky writes that some people serve the party line without really knowing that they are doing it. I mean they are closed off to seeing other points of view.

Blum: Of course. That's why it's so effective. You don't have people who are just consciously propagandizing. They believe what they're saying.

Galli: So at some point in your life did you "wake up?"

Blum: I was past the age of thirty when I changed my politics.

Galli: So what happened? What lead to that?

Blum: Vietnam. It was a shock to me. I was working for the State Department at the time.



Galli: What were you doing?

Blum: I was a computer programmer, but that wasn't why I was there. I was planning on becoming a foreign service officer and Vietnam changed my whole thinking.

Galli: Did you start publically coming out against the war?

Blum: No. I began to do volunteer work for a peace organization and then they asked me to hand out flyers against the war in front of the White House, which for me was a major step.

Galli: You were a State Department employee at the time?

Blum: Yes. And I was mostly afraid that some of my fellow employees at the State Department would pass by while I was handing out the flyers. But anyway, that caused me to meet other people who were anti-war protestors and that lead to getting involved in groups which were more or less Marxists, and that was the beginning of the end for me.

Galli: Was that against State Department policy?

Blum: Oh yeah. I was forced to leave because of that. They called me in and they opened up my file in front of me and turned page after page telling me what I had done on each day.

Galli: Do you think you could have challenged that in court?

Blum: Well by that time I had changed my mind about becoming a foreign service officer so I wasn't going to fight to keep my job.

Galli: The U.S. has been at war in Afghanistan for 11 years and four months. This virtually comprises the entire primary and secondary education for an entire generation of American students. What are your thoughts on this?

Blum: Yeah. That's correct...I mean what ... you know it's pretty obvious...um

Galli: Well, let me go to the next question. Do you think public school social science teachers have any enhanced responsibilities to their students during times of war?

Blum: They have a constant responsibility if they're teaching history to challenge the official line. Whether it's war or not. That's a constant responsibility. When it comes to foreign policy or even domestic policy, you can be sure that the official line is going to leave important things out.

Galli: And the official line comes from who? The government or the State department?

Blum: It doesn't have to be a conscious conspiracy or plan of any kind. As I mentioned before, you are talking about people who were raised in a way to believe certain things and it's very natural for them to carry it forward. They don't have to be taught in advanced by the FBI or the CIA what to say.

#### Interview with James Loewen

James Loewen is the bestselling author of *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* first published in 1995. In his 2007 edition, Loewen analyzed how six high school textbooks published in 2006-2007 treated 9/11 and its aftermath. Mr. Loewen was interviewed on February 19, 2013, in Washington D.C.

Galli: Suppose you are hired to write a segment regarding 9/11 and the U.S. response for an eleventh grade general survey U.S. history textbook. Because it is a general survey text, your editor requires the segment to be brief and concise. What would it look like?

Loewen: Well I would tell what happened. It is of course not a conspiracy, that is there's all these conspiracy theories about 9/11, as there are about the Kennedy assassination and other things, but the airliners did in fact bring down those two towers. I would actually mention why they were so easily brought down, which has to do with their design by Minoru Yamasaki and the breakthrough in inexpensive construction that he pioneered which we saw the results of. Probably that big of airliner hitting the Empire State building could not have brought it down,

but it certainly brought down each of the Twin Towers. Then I would get into why this occurred. Of course it occurred because of our presence in the Middle East. That's not to excuse it, and I wouldn't excuse it, but the students need to understand, or at least think about, why it occurred. The statements by the Bush administration deliberately, I think, obfuscated that. Basically they made the assertion that we were attacked because "we are so good." This is the typical American exceptionalism, that we are the exceptionally good country in the world, particularly in our foreign policy, and some other ways too, so other countries are basically irrational when they attack us, and terrorists particularly so. In fact the word "terrorist" implies irrationality already. And I would try to get students to do some thinking about these matters. I now realize, however, I need to reject your question in the first place. That is to say I don't want to be writing a textbook that tells the right answer. I would much rather have students get a multiplicity of sources and have to assess them, and think about why is this source more credible than that source and then come to a defensible conclusion. I don't say that because I think all conclusions are equally defensible. I don't. I don't say that because I think history is a matter of point of view. I don't. Obviously people from different points of view go after different questions and so on, but the towers did come down on September 11. They did not come down on September 10 or 12, and they did come down, being brought down, by a bunch of mostly, almost all, Arab terrorists, mostly from Saudi Arabia, but from some other countries; these are matters of fact and whatever opinion you wind up with has to be based on a bedrock of fact. So that's really how I would get students to going about it.

Galli: Why don't high school history texts cite sources?

Loewen: Isn't that the damndest thing? They would of course say because footnotes are off putting, and maybe they are. Publishers do believe this, not just textbook publishers, so you find

some books, what we might call popular history, that also have no footnotes and instead they maybe have kind of lugubrious bibliographic essays at the end that take a lot more space in the book than they would if they actually had footnotes. Some of them will even go so far as to cite a phrase on page 13 and then footnote it essentially all back in the appendix all to avoid this little tiny number on page 13. I don't know that they've ever done any marketing research on this. I think it's a shame that textbooks don't footnote. Another reason why they don't is because that might imply that there's some debatability about what they're talking about, that these sources say this, but just kind of by implication maybe some other sources don't, and they don't want to imply that because they conceive their job as telling what's what, and you the student are supposed to learn what's what.

Galli: That leads right in to my next question. In what way is a textbook segment of 9/11 official knowledge?

Loewen: I don't think that there is a conspiracy. In my case I read six U.S. history textbooks about 9/11. I did not find complete uniformity. Indeed one textbook was considerably better than any of the others and did question our attacking Iraq for instance, and pointed out that Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11 and so on. It's doing fine. It's one of the big six. It's selling lots of books. Furthermore, I don't think there's a clear mechanism for how, let's say, the United States government controls textbook adoption. And textbook adoption is done by the state of Texas; it's done by your high school, and in about 25 states it's done state wide. I think that the astounding uniformity of most of the textbooks results from a failure of the imagination on the part of textbook publishers. I can't see any mechanism by which the United States government enforces it or even suggests it.

Galli: Could we make the argument that the narrative that the government worked so hard to put out there has crept into the American psyche so that publishers know that if they challenge that, the people on adoption committees will not accept it.

Loewen: Well I certainly think that the publishers have an overabundance of caution, and they are cautious about saying anything bluntly lest they offend somebody and their book not get adopted. But I honestly think that a larger part of the reason why textbooks are so bad about the Iraq war is because of who writes them. And who writes them is not whose, in general, not whose name is on his on them as their authors. They are typically written by clerks; by unnamed people in the bowels of the publisher or in their home studios; we don't know where they're writing them. They get paid, they submit their book or their new chapter; nobody particularly reads it. I could not discover that any author, by which I mean "not author," whose names are on the cover ever read the Iraq chapter that they supposedly wrote.

Galli: But they are credited for it.

Lowen: Credited for not only reading it but writing. But I don't think they even read it. So I have evidence on another account that I don't think that, in fact, most states or school districts do much reading of the textbooks before they adopt them either, and here's why. I discovered that two of the six textbooks in their treatments of the Iraq war were basically identical for page after page. In a sense, this is the largest plagiarism scandal in the history of American history. Here we have two textbooks that are identical, or maybe one of them has the word "very" in it in a long paragraph and the other one doesn't, but they're otherwise identical for page after page. They've got the same photographs with the same captions. This is massive plagiarism. How could textbook adoption boards across United States, in individual school districts, in Texas, in California, in Mississippi, all of the south and about half of states adopt statewide, how could

they be reading these six books and nobody had noticed that? How come it fell to me to notice it? I assert it's because I'm the only person that ever actually ever read them. Other people look at the textbooks; they are deadly to read; I don't blame them for not reading them. You can't make 11 graders read them so why could we expect teachers or other textbook board members to read them voluntarily? They don't. They look at them, they see "oh, that's okay." This also means that the publishers are probably wrong in their assumption, in their unstated assumption, but clearly the assumption they hold, that they've got a watch out or they'll offend somebody. I know all about the Texas adoption program, controversies, and I know that textbooks have offended people. But on the other hand if you wrote a harder hitting textbook, a textbook that analyzes the attack Iraq with some accuracy, I think there'd be lots of school districts, including large urban school districts, and black rural school districts, and American Indian school districts, and all kinds of schools districts that would love to adopt this book. But publishers have never been able to bring themselves to test that theory by bringing out a book that's different from all the other books.

Galli: I had a colleague of mine, a fellow history teacher who supports my work, tell me that no one ever gets to the chapters on 9/11 anyway. So I think she was saying, I know it's your thesis but why does it matter?

Loewen: There's two problems with that. First of all, teachers should get the recent past. The recent past, after all, has more implications for us today than almost anything else. Certainly the war in Iraq has lots more repercussions today than say war of 1812, and that's not an unimportant war either, so they certainly should get to it. That's the first point. And the second point is, it's not as if the textbooks are therefore dramatically better when you look at say, why did the South

secede, or what was reconstruction about, or some other things in the distant past that teachers do get to. The textbooks obfuscate those things as well.

Galli: The U.S. has been at war in Afghanistan for 11 years and four months. This virtually comprises the entire primary and secondary education for an entire generation of American students. What are your thoughts on this?

Loewen: Well I've lamented this even before we had a war in Iraq. That is to say I was born in 1942. The United States has been at war somewhere almost every year of my life, and I don't even mean counting the Cold War; I mean hot wars when you count them all. So we have degenerated into an empire nation with a warfare garrison state.

Galli: Ok. So that statement could probably never make it into a high school textbook, right?

Loewen: At present it could not, and that's the problem. The reason why it could not is not because somebody from the federal government would intervene, it's because an editor at the stodgy textbook publishers would intervene. And for that matter, it's not just the editors. I interviewed some others who actually claim to me that they never got any editorial interference. Whereupon I should've asked them why didn't you say anything then? So you are right, but I think the reason why you are right is first of all, author caution; author pre-censorship. Second of all comes about, in many cases, because authors didn't write the book and the clerks who write the book have neither the knowledge base nor the social capital to be blunt.

.Galli: That almost seems dishonest and unethical.

Loewen: Really? Of course it is dishonest and unethical. It's an outrage!

Galli: Do you think public school social science teachers have any enhanced responsibilities to their students during times of war?

Loewen: No, I think they have the same responsibility during war and peace. I wouldn't know too much about times of peace because we don't have any. But if we ever had one, I think it would be good, and I think we have a responsibility to tell the truth about our foreign policy so that maybe we stay at a time of peace for a little longer.

Galli: The Bush Administration advanced one flawed argument after another for justifying the invasion of Iraq in 2003. While the administration was forced to admit these flaws after the invasion, literate persons applying a basic critical analysis could effectively expose the flaws prior to the invasion. And yet the media and the administration were allowed by most Americans – the majority of who had a public education - to perpetuate these flaws. What is going on here? Is it a failure of public education to produce critical thinkers?

Loewen: I think so. I think that's definitely part of it and I think it comes from several things. One is, in history and social studies courses you're supposed to memorize the book, in a way. You're supposed to tell us when the war 1812 started instead teaching the way I was suggesting earlier of having more than one source; having to access credibility. That's definitely one part of it. Another part of it is that we have the bizarre situation where most Americans at this point distrusts the government and think it lies, but at the same time most Americans parrot back what the government tells them. I think in some cases it's in bad faith. That is, I think that some Americans, of all political positions, don't believe what the government says but think we ought to be doing what it's doing anyway, or don't think that we should be challenging the government, don't like the folks who are challenging the government, and therefore kind of pretend to believe. I know, for instance, 61%, maybe a year after we invaded Iraq and it was utterly clear that there were no weapons of mass destruction and that we had known that ahead of time, something like 61%, according to one poll of Americans, still believed not only that they had weapons of mass



destruction, but also believed that Iraq had something to do with 9/11. Of course Iraq had utterly nothing to do with 9/11 and the leader of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, was a sworn enemy of Osama bin Laden. How can 61% believe that? I think to some extent it's a bad faith belief.

Galli: I asked William Blum the same question and he said that the reason why they reject it, reject the rational arguments that challenge that narrative, is that they have internalized the “benevolent nation” narrative.

Loewen: That's part of it. We do it throughout our culture. There's a story in the Washington Post this last Sunday, a review of a book about guerrilla warfare. And it keeps on making this mistake. It basically believes in American exceptionalism even though it flatly states that we had no business being in Vietnam. But nevertheless it assumes, and says so, that we were there to bring democracy and freedom to the Vietnamese people. Now how does that square with the known statement, for instance, of Dwight D. Eisenhower that we kept South Vietnam from holding a free election as required by the Geneva Peace Accords because, as Eisenhower put it, “Ho Chi Minh would win 80% of the vote.” How was this bringing democracy to South Vietnam? It's the opposite of it and the author who wrote this absolutely knows that; I'm sure of it. And yet he still believes that we were in Vietnam to bring democracy to Vietnam. That's an impossibility and it shows that he has not done enough critical thinking on his own thinking.

Galli: I was in a conversation with a student the other day and Columbus got brought up. And so I asked, “What do you know about Columbus?” I just thought I would test this, and you know, he'd already completed 11th grade history, and he parroted back the same sort of hero narrative that I was taught when I was in school. I was shocked because I know the teacher. I mean I wasn't in her class when she taught the lesson, but she used you, she uses Zinn, she used primary sources, and I shared this with her and she was astounded. She said, “I didn't teach that

narrative.” And although this is a small sample size my gut tells me that it has permeated the American consciousness, and I think the same thing with 9/11. If you ask kids today, they likely would link it to Iraq.

Loewen: I think it's unfortunate that people need to actually be brought into direct self-contradiction in order for to stand out so that it shakes what we might call their “UR thinking,” UR - thinking, otherwise they could learn it great and parrot it back while we're on the Columbus unit of the course, maybe even at the end of the course, but a year later when you talk with them it's just kind of gone. It's a matter of context almost.

Galli: And, you know, it makes the kids upset when you challenge those narratives.

Loewen: A lot of students, I think, become upset when you challenge their narrative, but not because you're challenging their narrative, rather they become upset because they've been lied to. There are other ways to get students into self-contradiction. Maybe having a debate. There's about five different theories as to why we did go into Iraq. I suppose we should list as one of them in retaliation for 9/11, even though that's a theory with no support whatsoever. So maybe there are six now. But some of the theories are because it fits in with the needs of VP Cheney and Halliburton and other companies that he and Bush were allied with, and so they made billions off of it. All right, that's a direct self-interest thing. That's a possibility. Another has to do with petrochemicals and oil. Of course we're not going to intervene to help Iraqi women because Saddam Hussein is inhumane. After all are we intervening in Zimbabwe? Mugabe's inhumane but Zimbabwe doesn't have any oil. Then we've got the matter of internal politics. Our going into that war in Iraq helped the Republican Party win a terrific victory in the congressional elections, and then it also helped Bush's reelection at the end of his first term. Okay, it's internal politics. And then there's a fourth and there's a fifth. Maybe five different arguments that

perhaps have some support. So, how about giving the students a paragraph about each of these arguments and let them sign up for which one that they believe and have them do two or three days' worth of research accessing sources and so on and then making an argument. I think at the end of that, it's going to be very difficult for anyone to believe either A: that we went into Iraq because of 9/11, or B: that we went in to bring democracy to the Iraqi people.

Galli: Have you ever compared the narratives in AP history textbooks with those marketed to general level high school students?

Loewen: In a way. I've compared the difference between college textbooks and high school textbooks. There is a dramatic difference. The college level textbooks are much more accurate and I think they're much more likely to be written by the authors whose names are on them.

#### Interview with Noam Chomsky

Between 1967 and 2013, Noam Chomsky published well over 80 books and essays on U.S. foreign policy. He is one of the most cited scholars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mr. Chomsky was interviewed on March 22, 2013 in Boston.

Galli: Let me start by reading a statement from your 1967 article *The Responsibility of Intellectuals*. You write, "The deceit and distortion surrounding the American invasion of Vietnam is by now so familiar that it has lost its power to shock." Here we are 46 years later and we could insert "the invasion of Iraq" and it doesn't lose any of its relevance.

Chomsky: That's true.

Galli: Are you surprised by this? Forty-six years later and we still have the same pattern.

Chomsky: It depends on who you mean by "we." If you mean the general intellectual community, that's not in the least surprising because it goes back way beyond that. I mean

intellectuals are the ones who write the history of intellectuals. So they come out looking pretty good, not surprisingly; independent, adversarial, courageous, not deluded by power and so on.

You take a look at the actual history and it's almost the exact opposite, and that's as far back as you go. In every society that I know of, as far back in history as you go, the vast bulk of people who we would call intellectuals, the term was always used, have been subordinate to power.

There's always been a fringe of dissidents. They're almost always treated quite badly. How badly depends on the nature of the society, and sometimes very badly, and later, maybe often centuries later, they may be respected, but not at the time. So why should I expect to change?

Galli: But you have dedicated a lot of your work to change this?

Chomsky: Not for the intellectual community. For the general population. I wouldn't say there's no changes, but it's pretty much the case, I think, that what's called the respected intellectuals will adhere to the traditional pattern. On the other hand, the general public can shift quite a lot. We've seen that very dramatically often.

Galli: In your 2011 essay titled *The Responsibility of Intellectuals Redux*, you talk about intellectuals that serve the government or served the establishment, and then you talk about "value oriented" intellectuals.

Chomsky: Yeah, that's not my term. That's the term that is used to denounce dissidents. In fact, if you look at the context, there was around the mid-70s a distinction made between the "technocratic policy oriented intellectuals," the good guys, those who just do the work of power, and the "value oriented intellectuals," those who pursue weird ideas of justice and freedom, the kind of sentimental types who we can dismiss. They're what McGeorge Bundy called the "wild man in the wings."

Galli: If someone were to call you a “value oriented intellectual” you wouldn’t necessarily reject that term.

Chomsky: No. Except that I don’t use the term intellectual much. Value oriented, sure.

Everybody ought to be value oriented.

Galli: The term “intellectual” itself is value laden and it’s off-putting to certain people who see it as arrogant, distrustful.

Chomsky: It’s an interesting term. The term achieved its modern usage pretty recently in the Dreyfus trial. The Dreyfusards called themselves, and we’re called, intellectuals. They were what we call dissident intellectuals. We now honor them, but not at the time. The “immortals,” as the Académie Française, you know, the serious intellectuals, bitterly denounced them as “value oriented intellectuals.” What right do you have to go into the fields that you don’t know anything about and to condemn our noble army and state and so on. Emile Zola, the leading Dreyfusard had to flee from France. Years later they were honored. You take the next big step shortly after that came the first World War, by then the term “intellectual” was well-established. And if you look, in every country, Germany, France, England, the United States, the major intellectuals, the respectable, honorable intellectuals, were totally dedicated to the war effort. That was true of the liberal progressive intellectuals in the United States. And each group gave passionate explanations of why their nation was exactly right. There were dissidents, Bertrand Russell for example, who ended up in jail. There was Rosa Luxembourg in Germany who ended up in jail. There’s Eugene Debs in the United States who ended up in jail. And in general it fit the pattern. And so it continues to the present, and it goes back much earlier, before the term intellectual was used.

Galli: I'm using it as a frame. I mean it's not used much as a reference or a descriptor in high schools. If I were to say in the faculty room that "we have a responsibility as intellectuals," that might strike others as really odd. I don't know that they see themselves in a privileged position. I believe we are...

Chomsky: Sure we are. We all are very privileged.

Galli: As educators.

Chomsky: Just as educated people who have jobs in colleges and universities, high schools, wherever it may be. We're pretty privileged people.

Galli: Right. So you write in '67 "It is the responsibility of intellectuals to speak the truth and to expose lies."

Chomsky: It seems like a truism. It's the responsibility of everyone, so therefore even more so of privileged people, and even more so for those called intellectuals.

Galli: So you would be comfortable saying that high school teachers operate in an intellectual arena.

Chomsky: Yeah.

Galli: Just the same as professors.

Chomsky: Not so much as professors because professors are unusually privileged. High school teachers are more part of the working class than professors are for lots of reasons. That's not a criticism, it's just a distinction.

Galli: But our responsibility would be ...

Chomsky: The same. But I think privilege confers opportunities, opportunities confer responsibility. So the greater you're privileged, the greater your responsibility. I can do things that the guy who is collecting the trash just can't do because I'm much more privileged.

Galli: Of course you wouldn't necessarily need any kind of formal education to be considered an intellectual.

Chomsky: That has to do with the way that the term intellectual is used. You don't need any formal education necessarily to have deep ideas and understanding and perception of the world, but if you don't, you're not called an intellectual. The term intellectual is a very strange usage. So if you walk around, say MIT, and you find a Nobel laureate in physics working in his lab and that's what he concentrates on, we don't call him an intellectual. If you go to the local restaurant and get to know the waiter, the waiter happens to really understand a lot of things about the world and has intelligent things to say about it, we don't call him an intellectual. The people who we call intellectuals are the privileged educated sector who choose to talk about affairs of general interest to people. That doesn't mean they have anything to say. That doesn't mean they have any particular perception. It doesn't mean that they're smart rather than dumb. It's just that's the category that's called intellectual. I don't find it a very useful category, frankly.

Galli: I'm wondering then, those that have the ability to critically analyze any given situation, media, history, there is no term for them but just critically, thoughtful folks?

Chomsky: People with insight and understanding. And it tends to correspond very closely to privilege and education for obvious reasons. If you're lucky enough to have gone to good schools, go to a good college and maybe get an advanced degree, you have access to lots of resources that most people just don't have access to, thanks to your privilege.

Galli: Well high school educators, if they seek out the materials, they have considerable access now. For example, I live about twenty miles from Dartmouth and for forty-five dollars I got a library card for three months.

Chomsky: That's right. Which is fantastic. Most of my own education as a grad student came walking around the Harvard stacks.

Galli: So, one of the arguments I am trying to make in my paper is that we high school educators need to understand that we have responsibilities to tell the truth. And I know that we can argue what truth is...

Chomsky: Whatever we call ourselves, if you're a carpenter or a school teacher, or a college professor, or the editor of a journal whatever...

Galli: But we are teaching. For example every high school history class is going to do a unit on the Middle East so ...

Chomsky: People who are dealing with young people, helping them find their own way, the responsibility is extreme.

Galli: Right, and I would say that we get them before you do. So I wonder if there is an added responsibility?

Chomsky: What's more by the time say I get them, they happen to be graduate students mostly. They're now professionally focused and we talk about advanced questions in the technical fields and most of them wouldn't qualify as intellectuals. Nor do I as long as I am talking to them about that. But that's just because of the strange usage of the term.

Galli: I want to talk about what I call "independence from a safe perch." I read once that in the '60s you expected to be jailed ...

Chomsky: I was very close.

Galli: ...and that your wife went back to school because you had expected that she may need to support the family.

Chomsky: She was a sixteenth year grad student at Harvard when she graduated.



Galli: I understand it was the Pentagon Papers and the court challenge which...

Chomsky: No not really. It was resistance to the war. Direct resistance. There were trials of the resistance, people who were openly publicly opposing the war, supporting young people who were refusing to serve, and that, of course, was a crime. It's a conspiracy to violate the selective service act. I mean, I was involved in other kinds of resistance, like tax resistance too, but they chose not to go after that. I was close to a trial. The Tet Offensive came along, January '68, and that convinced the government to shift its policies, and among the shift was calling off the trials. But, in fact, I was the name of the defendant in the very next trial.

Galli: Let's say a high school teacher comes along, he hasn't published anything, he's not well-known, there's certain people, you know, you have a vast body of work which you don't need me to remind you of, so that when you criticize from where you are at MIT, it's less likely that it would threaten your job.

Chomsky: Actually it depended on where you were. MIT happened to have a very good record, which is kind interesting because it's almost 100% funded by the Pentagon, but it had one of the best, not perfect, but one of the best records on academic freedom. So, actually our lab, which was 100% Pentagon funded, was one of the academic centers of resistance. We never heard a word about it from the administration. I'm sure they got a lot of flak, but it didn't get back to us.

Galli: The point I'm making is that a high school teacher who challenges the party line is more vulnerable than a published professor.

Chomsky: Yes. You would. That's part of the difference. A high school teacher is subject to outside discipline and control and a college professor is much less so.

Galli: So you would say that as high school teachers if we take to heart the responsibility to "teach the truth and expose lies," let's say in textbooks...

Chomsky: It's much more difficult.

Galli: ...we place ourselves at a greater risk.

Chomsky: Absolutely, because you place yourself at the risk of firing. Whereas if that happened at a university, it does happen, but there would be a big outcry about it.

Galli: So do you see that as part of the problem? Let me put that in context. We know, and you've written on this yourself, that the invasion of Iraq was probably the most preemptively protested war in history. Yet there seemed to be a whole lot of support and a lot of the general public not critically calling into question what they were being exposed to.

Chomsky: And it's interesting to see the reasons.

Galli: I have a working hypothesis that there is something in public ed that didn't work to produce high school graduates with the abilities to critically analyze what they were being told.

Chomsky: Partly. The population was frightened. This has always been a very frightened country, back to colonial days. But the population was genuinely frightened. Even among educated intellectuals. They were frightened that the Iraqis were attacking us.

Galli: But see I find that hard... I mean you know... I just had a BA by then and you know I ... the news the rhetoric, anyone that applied ...

Chomsky: It was transparently ridiculous.

Galli: You're right. So you walk around feeling like...

Chomsky: Let's take a real case. Take say, Thomas Friedman, Middle East specialist, leading liberal commentator for the New York Times, multiple Pulitzer Prize winner, he was asked on television, the Charlie Rose show, one of the few discussion programs aimed at intellectuals incidentally, about May 2003; he was asked what he thought the American troops in Iraq ought to do. You have to read the actual wording to get the flavor of it. I urge you to do it. Basically

what he said is our boys and girls ought to break into homes in Basra and Baghdad and tell those people there “what is it that you don't understand about the fact that we want to be left alone. Suck on that.” He was saying that the women and children who were being intimidated in Basra and Baghdad are somehow responsible for 9/11. Now that's about as extreme an indication of the misunderstanding of the almost lunacy of what many of the public believed on the part of one of the most respected intellectuals and liberal commentators and Middle East specialist. So, you know, what do you expect of the public?

Galli: I remember reading about the aluminum tubes story being debunked, that the aluminum tubes were not of the grade to enrich uranium, that came out in the press, and then the President actually used that as an argument in an address to the American people. It was all already refuted in the press. You know that doesn't take any special...

Chomsky: It was refuted in the press but that is for 5% of the population. A few people who took the trouble to read the details knew about it. But for most of the public it wasn't true, and I don't know if it was true for Thomas Friedman who's sitting there as a New York Times columnist and the specialist on the Middle East. A lot of these things are there, but it takes research, effort, the critical abilities that ought to be taught in school, to even look for the evidence. I mean when Colin Powell gave his famous speech, I mean anybody who knew anything knew that this was off the wall ...

Galli: He used cartoons.

Chomsky: ...but he looked serious and everybody took him seriously.

Galli: When we look at that, it seems to me that people in my profession at the high school level aren't doing their job. First, I think, you would have to teach kids how to look at media and how to analyze media.

Chomsky: How to think through things. I don't have to tell you that's not being done in schools and if a teacher tries to do it in a school they'll probably get in trouble.

Galli: So why do you think that is?

Chomsky: Because the educational system, like other things that are part of the cultural establishment, are subordinate to power. Why was it that during the first World War in every country the educational system, the cultural system, the most sophisticated intellectuals, the John Dewey circle in the United states, why were they dedicated to the war of their own country? Well, you know, that's the way indoctrination works in most societies, all societies probably.

Galli: You've written about intellectuals who believe, and I think it's intellectuals... let's drop the term intellectuals, but educated people who believe, and I think you've linked that to a history of indoctrination starting in primary grades on up, to where they're not even capable of seeing certain...

Chomsky: They don't perceive it.

Galli: Can you speak to that?

Chomsky: You can't see what's around you. I mean it's utterly transparent that George Bush and Tony Blair committed a textbook case of the crime that led to Nazi criminals being hanged in Nuremburg. Does anybody say that?

Galli: You mean with the...

Chomsky: The invasion of Iraq. It's a textbook case of aggression. The Nuremburg Tribunal, foundation of modern international law, determines that to be the supreme international crime differing from other war crimes in that it encompasses all the evil that follows. All the evil that follows includes hundreds of thousands of dead, millions of refugees, the Sunni/Shia conflict which is tearing the region apart, can you read that somewhere?

Galli: So do you think that is not there because they're not seeing it or out of fear?

Chomsky: I think they're not seeing it. And in fact it's interesting how public opinion often varies from intellectual opinion. A very dramatic example of that was around 1975, end of the Vietnam War. As the war ended, of course every commentator had to write something about it, so we know a lot about the opinion of elite intellectuals. They ranged. There were, roughly speaking, the hawks who said noble cause, didn't fight hard enough, got stabbed in the back; there were the doves, maybe the most extreme was Anthony Lewis of the New York Times, a very critical intellectual, who said the war began with blundering efforts to do good, but by 1969 became a disaster. And it became clear that we could not bring a democracy to South Vietnam at a cost acceptable to ourselves. I mean, you can read that in communist propaganda about Afghanistan. On the other hand we also know what the public thought. There were polls, important polls done by the Council on Foreign Relations, a very serious institute, did polls on attitudes, maybe 1978, they asked the question: What do you think about the war in Vietnam? There were a couple of choices. The one that was picked by 70% of the population was that the war was fundamentally wrong and immoral, not a mistake. That's the population. You couldn't find a hint of that in any of the commentary except way out at the end.

Galli: You write that there is often a huge disconnect to what people on the street feel about any given topic and what is reported. So then are we looking at possibly, a group of critical thinkers that aren't haunting the halls of academia and so were just hearing from the halls?

Chomsky: It's very hard to tell because there's not a lot of good political science research demonstrating this. There's an important book called the Foreign Policy Disconnect, which contrasts public attitudes to elite opinion, and many studies also on domestic policy, but the interesting thing is nobody ever asks why the public believes these things. The public opinion is

considered so incomprehensible that it isn't even investigated. So in the case that I mentioned, fundamentally wrong and immoral, not a mistake, incidentally that opinion is repeated for about fifteen years until they stopped asking the question, the editor of the studies who is an intelligent scholar, he gives the reason without investigating it. He says "well people say that because too many Americans were killed." Well that's one possibility, and there are other possibilities, but the other possibilities are so outlandish they couldn't even ask the polling question. And that's pretty typical. So we really don't know, you can guess, but you don't really know why the public thinks these things.

Galli: But if we accept that we are churning kids through a public education without developing the ability to look at current events and media and analyze critically ...

Chomsky: I think the system is set up like that. Even more so now than in the past. Take the education innovations of the past ten years. Teaching to tests, No Child Left Behind, I mean that is designed to ensure that nobody understands anything. I mean every one of us who has gone to college has been through the experience many times of having to take a test on something you don't care about, and you study hard for the test and you get an A and a week later you forgot what the course was about. That's what such programs are designed for. Not for critical thinking.

Galli: The three textbooks that I am analyzing all use the "war on terror" or the "war on terrorism" as a title or subtitle.

Chomsky: What do they say about when it was declared?

Galli: They don't give a definitive date, but after 9/11. Only one textbook attributes the phrase "war on terror" to George Bush.

Chomsky: Who do the others attribute it to?

Galli: They don't.

Chomsky: They don't attribute it at all.

Galli: No.

Chomsky: Actually that's kind of interesting because it was really Ronald Reagan.

Galli: Right, and that's not talked about at all.

Chomsky: Scholarship too, doesn't talk about Reagan's war on terror.

Galli: My question is, you've written on it, Lakoff wrote a good essay on it, Ron Paul had the courage to denounce it publically, that a "war on terror" is absurd. Terror is an abstract noun...

Chomsky: These are not my criticisms. I don't consider those criticisms serious. My criticism is quite different and it started in 1981 when Reagan declared that international terrorism is going to be the focus of our foreign policy. That's when the scholarly study of terrorism began. The volumes on terrorism, the conferences, the academic programs, and I started writing about it then, too, but I took a different slant. I said okay, let's assume it's a serious problem, at first we have to say what we mean by terrorism, and I said I'll be conservative. I took the U.S. code. I said okay let's adopt the US code from the army manuals and let's just apply it. Then I went on to point out that ok, yes it's a serious problem, and the leading terrorist state in the world is the United States. Well that immediately rules it out of discussion even though it's pretty straightforward, and in fact what's happened since then is quite interesting in scholarship. There's been a long effort, at conferences and volumes and so, to try to define terrorism, and the conclusion is that it's a really difficult concept to define. Why not use the U.S. code? And there's a good reason for that. Because if you use any of the official definitions, you'd draw my conclusion. So you have to find another definition which excludes the terror that we carry out against them and includes the terror that they carry out against us, and that is a difficult thing.

Galli: The only time the word terrorism is used outside of 9/11 in the textbooks that that I am studying is in reference to the Ku Klux Klan.

Chomsky: Yeah, because those are people we don't like. The real question is do they allow as terror the war against Nicaragua for which the U.S. was convicted by the International Court of Justice? Or the war on Cuba which was severe terrorism, and in fact was called by Arthur Schlesinger, Kennedy's advisor, he said we have to bring the "terrors of the earth" to Cuba. Is that counted? That was very serious. If things like that are not counted, you know it's not serious.

Galli: You're not going to find it in your high school textbook.

Chomsky: Or scholarship for that matter.

Galli: I'm arguing in my paper that the 1990 basing of American troops in Saudi Arabia is one of the most important missing bits of context for understanding the war on terror. The textbooks suggest that the troops were necessary because...

Chomsky: They were going to attack Saudi Arabia.

Galli: Yeah, and we don't really have any evidence for that do we?

Chomsky: In fact we have evidence against it. That's only one part of that. What they also don't tell you is that Saddam invaded Kuwait August 6, roughly then, within about a week he realized he'd made a bad mistake and he was trying to negotiate his way out, and right up until the bombing repeated offers came from Iraq to negotiate a withdrawal. The press here, I won't say didn't publish it, refused to publish it. I know this personally through personal contacts with editors. I can give you more details if you like. One newspaper published regular leaks from the State Department saying this. The newspaper was Long Island Newsday, a suburban newspaper from Long Island. Now, State Department officials don't leak things to suburban newspapers.



What was plainly happening is that they were leaking it to the New York Times which refused to publish it. The Long Island paper published it. That's on New York newsstands. So you pass by a New York newsstand you see a headline, "Saddam Says Let's Talk: US Says No." The next day the New York Times is compelled to publish on page 22 a three line denial. That's it. That went on right up until the bombing. The whole thing was unbelievable. There's plenty of other things they don't tell you. They don't tell you, for example, that shortly before the invasion, maybe year before, President Bush had invited Iraqi nuclear engineers to the United States for advanced training in nuclear weapons production. They don't tell you that. And it goes on and on. There are a lot of filters on what gets through.

Galli: So we've got fifteen or sixteen year-old kids. They're sitting in your classroom. You got to teach America's response to the "war on terror." You're going to do a unit on the "war on terror." What do you think they need to take away from that?

Chomsky: Well, what I think they out to take away is essentially what we're been talking about. First what is terror? Take the U.S. code that tells us with terror is, take Army manuals, and we say, okay let's take a look at what terrorism is and let's see how it applies. What are the examples of terror as defined officially by the United States? And I'd take major cases; I could give a whole bunch of them like Cuba, Nicaragua, the U.S. backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, they're all massive cases of terror. Ok, so yes, let's fight a war on terror. Let's stop engaging in it.

## Text Analysis

*Number of Words McGraw, Prentice, and Holt Dedicate to Examining the Origins for the “War on Terror”*

	The 1979 Soviet incursion into Afghanistan	The Soviet’s Reasons for their 1979 incursion in Afghanistan	U.S. relationship with the Mujahideen	Political goals of the Mujahideen	U.S. relationship with Iraq prior to Persian Gulf War	Iraq’s reasons for their 1991 invasion of Kuwait	U.S. relationship with Saudi Arabia prior to Persian Gulf War to present
McGraw-Hill	Words-41 p. 640 Words-55 p. 661 Words-26 p. 697	Words-0	Words-19 p. 661	Words-0	Words-0	Words-0	Words-0
Prentice Hall	Words-66 p. 616 Words-60	Words-20 p. 616	Words-60 p. 640	Words-0	Words-0	Words-12 p. p. 647	Words-0
Holt McDougal	Words-152 p. 815	Words-16 p. 815	Words-0	Words-0	Words-0	Words-37 p. 853 Words-7 p. 898	Words-0

	Bin Laden’s complaints against U.S.	Palestinian/Israeli conflict	Consequence of U.S. embargo against Iraq	1982 Lebanon War
McGraw Hill	Words-0	Words-120 p. 681 Words-149 p. 696-97	Words-0	Words-0
Prentice Hall	Words-19 p. 670 Words-20 p. 674	Words-240 p. 669-70 Words-48 p. 385	Words-0	Words-0
Holt McDougal	Words-0	Words-91 p. 625	Words-18 p. 855	Words-0

## Declaring War on an Abstract Noun

Any serious inquiry into understanding how high school history texts frame “the war on terror” cannot commence without an inquiry into the nomenclature of the phrase itself. All three textbooks use a construction of “the war on terror” as a title heading, but no textbook questions the phrase’s use or origin. Holt devotes four pages of discussion under the title *The War on Terrorism*, Prentice two pages under the title *America’s War on Terror*, and McGraw one page under the title *The War on Terrorism Begins* (Danzer, Klor de Alva, Krieger, Wilson, & Woloch, 2012, p. 894; Lapsansky-Werner, Levy, Roberts, & Taylor, 2013, p. 673; Appleby, Brinkley, Broussard, McPherson, & Ritchie, 2014, p. 697).

While all three texts attribute the phrase “war on poverty” to President Johnson, only one (Prentice) links the phrase “war on terror” to President Bush (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 674). For Holt and McGraw to divorce the phrase “war on terror” from the presidency leads its readers to conclude that war was an inevitable response to 9/11. In fact, under the title *The War on Terrorism Begins*, an author for McGraw writes :

On September 20, 2001, President Bush demanded that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan turn over bin Laden and his supporters and shut down all terrorist camps. The United States began building international support against terrorism and began deploying troops to the Middle East. The war would not end quickly, but it was a war the nation had to fight...(Appleby et al. 2014, p. 697).

The authors’ last sentence harbors three logical fallacies. First, the use of the word “war” is in reference to “the war on terrorism.” Terrorism is not imbued with any physical property that can be geographically located and martially defeated. As Ron Paul (2007) has repeatedly reminded the public in his run for the presidency, terrorism is a tactic and “you can’t have war on

a tactic” (Paul 2007, para. 2). Second, there can be no “end” to a tactic. Third, “the nation” had a choice in its response to 9/11. It didn’t “have to” act one way or the other. How such irresponsible prose can be published in a text marketed to educate is hard to understand.

Cognitive linguist George Lakoff (2005) reminds us that the word “terror” is not an enemy, but a part of speech. He writes:

The abstract noun, "terror," names not a nation or even people, but an emotion and the acts that create it. A "war on terror" can only be metaphorical. Terror cannot be destroyed by weapons or signing a peace treaty. A war on terror has no end. The president's war powers have no end... The phrase "War on Terror" was chosen with care. "War" is a crucial term. It evokes a war frame, and with it, the idea that the nation is under military attack -- an attack that can only be defended militarily, by use of armies, planes, bombs, and so on. The war frame includes special war powers for the president, who becomes commander in chief. It evokes unquestioned patriotism, and the idea that lack of support for the war effort is treasonous. It forces Congress to give unlimited powers to the President, lest detractors be called unpatriotic (Lakoff, 2005, para. 5 ).

While Holt introduces the invasion of Iraq under the subtitle *War Against Iraq*, it uses the sub- title *Antiterrorist Measures* to introduce the invasion of Afghanistan. After reporting on the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, Holt prints, “The Bush Administration also began waging a war against terrorism. In October 2001, coalition forces led by the United States began bombing Afghanistan” (Danzer et al. 2012, p. 867). A “war” against Afghanistan- which is its eleventh year at this writing - is never mentioned. And while Prentice introduces “invading Afghanistan” as “the first step in what Bush called the “war on terror,”” it does so under the

misleading title *America's War on Terror* (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 673, 674). The “war on terror” is a government’s war, not a people’s war.

According to Karen Hughes, Counselor to the President at the time of the terrorist attacks, President Bush spoke about launching a “war against terror” during a National Security Council briefing held in the afternoon from a bunker at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska on September 11. Hughes, who says she watched the briefing from a bunker in the White House, quotes the president as saying, “We are at war against terror, and from this day forward, this is the new priority of our administration” (Hughes, 2012, para. 6). That evening, in a television broadcast from the Oval Office, the President would tell the nation, “America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism” (Bush, G.W., 2001, Sept. 12, para. 12). While speaking with reporters on September 16, Bush referred to a war on terror twice. The President stated, “In the course of this conduct of this war against terrorism, I’ll be asked a lot, and members of my administration will be asked a lot of questions about our strategies and tactics,” and, “This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while” (Bush, G.W., 2001, Sept. 16, para. 12, 17). In his work titled *Bush at War*, journalist Bob Woodward (2002) quotes the President telling his National Security Council on September 17, “The purpose of this meeting is to assign tasks for the first wave of the war on terrorism (p. 97).” In his address to a joint session of Congress on September 20, the President would say, “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated” (Bush, G.W., 2001, Sept. 20, para. 41). Thus, as Lakoff alluded, a state of perpetual war was named and declared.

### The First “War on Terror”

President Bush’s “war on terror” is actually the government’s second terror war, yet you will find no mention of this in the three textbooks under consideration. In April of 1984 President Reagan sent to Congress a Presidential Directive asking for four new laws to help combat “our war against terrorism.” The President explained:

In recent years; a very worrisome and alarming new kind of terrorism has developed: the direct use of instruments of terror by foreign states. This “state terrorism” ... accounts for the great majority of terrorist murders and assassinations. Also disturbing is the state-provided training, financing, and logistical support to terrorists and terrorist groups. These activities are an extremely serious and growing source of danger to us, our friends, and our allies and are a severe challenge to America's foreign policy...Dealing with the immediate effect of terrorist violence is only part of the challenge, however. We must also ensure that the states now practicing or supporting terrorism do not prosper in the designs they pursue. We must ensure that international forums, such as the United Nations, take a balanced and practical view of who is practicing terrorism and what must be done about it. We must assure that governments that are currently passive-or inactive-respecting this scourge understand the threat of terrorism poses for all mankind and that they cooperate in stopping it. We must work to assure that there is no role in a civilized society for indiscriminate threatening, intimidation, detention, or murder of innocent people. We must make it clear to any country that is tempted to use violence to undermine democratic governments, to destabilize our friends, thwart efforts to promote democratic governments, or disrupt our lives that it has nothing to gain, and much to lose (Reagan, 1984, April 26, p. 1,2).

Two months later in a speech delivered at the Jonathan Institute's second Conference on International Terrorism in Washington DC, Reagan's secretary of state, George Shultz, explained the new war.

[T]he peoples of the free world have finally begun to grapple with the problem of terrorism in intellectual and in practical terms. I say intellectual because the first step toward a solution to any problem is to understand that there is a problem and then to understand its nature ...[Terrorism] appears in many shapes and sizes-from the lone individual who plants a homemade explosive in a shopping center, to the small clandestine group that plans kidnappings and assassinations of public figures, to the well-equipped and well-financed organization that uses force to terrorize an entire population...The United States and its democratic allies are morally committed to certain ideals and to a humane vision of the future. In our foreign policies, we try to foster the kind of world that promotes peaceful settlement of disputes, one that welcomes change without violent conflict. We seek a world in which human rights are respected by all governments, a world based on the rule of law. States that sponsored terrorism are using it as another weapon of warfare, to gain strategic advantage where they cannot use conventional means...It is time to think long, hard, and seriously about more active means of defense-about defense through appropriate preventative or preemptive actions against terrorist groups before they strike...[To quote Sen. Henry Jackson], "The idea that one person's 'terrorist' is another person's 'freedom fighter' cannot be sanctioned. Freedom fighters or revolutionaries don't blow up buses containing noncombatants; terrorist murderers do. Freedom fighters don't set out to capture and slaughter schoolchildren; terrorist murderers do. Freedom fighters don't assassinate innocent

businessmen, or hijack and hold hostage innocent men, women, and children; terrorist murderers do. It is a disgrace that democracies would allow the treasured word ‘freedom’ to be associated with the acts of terrorists (Schultz, 1984, p.1,2).

Seeds for the “Bush Doctrine” (pre-emptive war) were clearly planted in the writings of the President and his Secretary of State. So, too, was the practice of deceit, deception, and betrayal. At a time when the Reagan government defined, described, and denounced “state-sponsored” terrorism, it was one of its largest practitioners. U.S. support for the Mujahideen in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1982 was at the time the largest covert operation in C.I.A. history (Johnston, 2003). While Reagan referred to the Mujahideen jihadists as “freedom fighters,” the Soviets described them as terrorists (Reagan, 1983, para. 3). In a post war analysis compiled by the Russian General Staff titled, *The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost*, Colonel V.A. Runov writes:

The Mujahideen leaders pay great attention to sabotage and terrorist actions. These were carried out by specially trained groups and detachments of varying strengths ... The more common types of sabotage included damaging military equipment and power lines, knocking out pipelines and radio stations, and blowing up government office buildings, air terminals, hotels, movie theaters, and so on ... They practiced shooting at automobiles, shooting out of automobiles, laying mines in government accommodations or houses, using poison, and rigging explosive charges in transport. From 1985 through 1987, there were over 1,800 terrorist acts recorded. Moreover, in 1985 there were some 450 acts, whereas there were 600 in 1987 (The Russian General Staff, 2002, p. 70).

On April 13, 1979 the New York Times published two articles linking the Mujahideen to acts of terrorism. Journalist Richard Burt reported that “insurgents had killed 16 Soviet civilians,



including two women, and mutilated their bodies” (Burt, 1979, para. 3). In a separate story William Borders wrote that U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Adolf Dubs, “died in a shootout between the police and Afghan terrorist who had kidnapped him and were holding him in a Kabul hotel room” (Borders, 1979, para. 18). Two months later in a Washington Post article titled ‘*Grim*’ Nickname Fits Tales of Afghan Torture, Murder, journalist Jonathan Randal wrote that “The favorite tactic of the Islamic tribesmen is to torture victims by first cutting off their noses, ears and genitals, then removing one slice of skin after another... [Their] favorite victims are Soviet advisers and their dependents, government and party officials and school teachers identified with the new order and with such suspect reforms as literacy courses for women” (Randal, 1979, para. 4, 17).

One of the biggest recipients of U.S. aide was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, an Islamic fundamentalist who, in 1970, shot and threw acid at [Afghan] women in Western dress (Keddie, 2007, p. 118). The Soviets described him as “cruel” (The Russian General Staff, 2002, p. 54). In his book *Blank Check: The Pentagon’s Black Budget*, Tim Weiner (1990) writes that though Hekmatyar was “a man who stood for almost everything the West despises [he] became the biggest beneficiary of the CIA’s arm shipments” (p. 149). In his work *Holy War Inc*, Peter Bergin (2001) writes that of the \$3 billion dollars the CIA paid the Mujahideen, \$600 million went to Hekmatyar” (p. 68). Bergin also reports that Hekmatyar “slaughtered thirty-six” rival Mujahideen. “This massacre was then extensively covered by human rights organizations. By 1990 a State Department report singled out Hekmatyar for killing fellow Afghans. From 1992 onward, Hekmatyar would kill thousands of civilians in Kabul during his daily rocket attacks on the city, despite the fact that he had been given the title of prime minister in the mujahideen coalition government” (Bergin, 2001, p. 70).

Reagan's Contra "freedom fighters" in Nicaragua are another example of U.S. sponsored terrorism during this period (Reagan, 1984, May 9, para. 26). After leftist rebels overthrew the oppressive U.S. sponsored Somoza regime – known for "rape, torture, murder of the opposition, and massacres of peasants" – the Reagan government spent over \$300 million to arm, train and support the Contras in their bid to overthrow the new Sandinista government (Blum, 2004, p. 290; Weinraub, 1989). In his work titled, *Contra Terror in Nicaragua Report of a Fact-finding Mission: September 1984 – January 1985*, Reed Brody (1985) documents over 28 gruesome acts of brutality inflicted upon a civilian population at the hands of Contra soldiers, most of who were commanded by former officers in Somoza's army ( p. 19). "Unarmed men women and children" were subjected to "premeditated acts ...of rape, beatings, mutilation and torture" (p. 21). In a separate index, Brody (1985) lists 341 specific incidents of Contra terrorism committed against civilians between December 2, 1981 and November 30, 1984 as documented by other sources (p. 154 – 183). In October of 1984, the U.S. press published excerpts of a CIA manual prepared for the Contras that gave instructions on how to kill and kidnap civilians, blow-up public buildings, and incite mob violence (Brinkley, 1984). In response to these terrorist acts, the Sandinistas took the United States to court. In *Nicaragua v. The United States*, the International Court of Justice, which the U.S. helped establish after WWII, found the United States government guilty of war crimes and ordered it to pay reparations to the Republic of Nicaragua (International Court of Justice, 1986). During the trial the U.S. delegates walked out of the courtroom and Washington simply ignored the verdict (Los Angeles Times, 1985).

Only McGraw and Prentice make any reference to Reagan's "war on terror," and both confine their remarks to Libya's support of the 1986 terrorist bombing of the La Belle discothèque in Berlin and the United States retaliatory airstrike against Tripoli (Appleby et al.

2014, p. 661; Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 644). As for the war in Nicaragua, only Holt speaks of the corruption of the Somoza dictatorship and the U.S. role in helping to establish it (Danzon et al. 2012, p. 851). All three texts record that Reagan supported the Contras to counteract Soviet influence in the Sandinista government, and though all three introduce the Iran/Contra scandal, none provide context or details of the war. How the texts report on the Mujahideen is discussed in a later section.

### Defining the Problem

A look at how textbooks define “terrorism” can also be informative. The McGraw textbook defines terrorism in a sidebar as: “The use of violence by nongovernmental groups against civilians to achieve a political goal by instilling fear and frightening governments into changing policies” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 696). The Holt textbook states in text that “Terrorism is the use of violence against people or property to extort changes in societies or governments” (Danzon et al. 2012, p. 894). Note that Holt’s definition allows for the possibility of “state sponsored” terrorism while McGraw’s does not. Oddly, however, the page following McGraw’s sidebar definition contains the following passage:

In the 1970s, several Middle Eastern nations realized they could fight Israel and the United States by providing terrorists with money, weapons, and training. This is called state-sponsored terrorism. The governments of Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Iran have all sponsored terrorists (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 697).

The Prentice textbook simply uses the word undefined.

In their sample of high school history texts published between 2004-06 and 2009-10, Hess and Stoddard (2011) found that while “All but two of the textbooks provided explicit [and sometimes different], authoritative definitions of terrorism ... none allows for the possibility that

its definition could be contested or wrong. That is, the texts present terrorism as an established concept that means the same thing everywhere” (p.177).

The U.S. Patriot Act, the FBI, The U.S. Army, and the Department of Defense have all used different definitions of terrorism as well as the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the Arab Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism (Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, 2013). As is pointed out in text accompanying Arizona Military Museum’s exhibit on the Global War on Terrorism, “The difficulty in defining ‘terrorism’ is in agreeing on a basis for determining when the use of violence (directed at whom, by whom, for what ends) is legitimate; therefore, the modern definition of terrorism is inherently controversial” (Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, 2013, p. 1). As demonstrated above, The Holt, McGraw, and Prentice textbooks avoid addressing such controversy.

### Setting the Stage

U.S. support for the Mujahideen in Afghanistan is the connecting link between Reagan’s “war on terror,” and that of George W. Bush. It is here that the first association between the al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and U.S. foreign policy can be made. One would not learn this by reading Holt, however, as bin Laden’s association with the Mujahideen is not mentioned. McGraw simply reports that “In 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and Muslims from across the world headed there to help fight the Soviets. Among them was Osama bin Laden” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 697). Prentice only records that “Bin Laden had fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s on the side of Islamic fundamentalists who sought to expel the Soviet Union” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 670). In fact, Bin Laden was a close associate of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (Bergen, 2001, p. 54, 71). In his Pulitzer Prize winning book *Ghost Wars: The Secret*

*History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, Steve Coll (2005) writes that Hekmatyar “gathered around him the most radical, anti-Western, transnational Islamists fighting in the jihad - including bin Laden and other Arabs who arrived as volunteers...” (Coll, 2005, p.119). Once in Pakistan, Bin Laden worked with Saudi intelligence using his money to recruit Arabs from around the globe to come fight the Russians in Afghanistan (Coll, 2005). He even set up recruiting centers in the United States. In the mid-1980s Bin Laden helped establish Mujahideen recruiting centers in Atlanta, Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, Pittsburg, and Tucson (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks in the United States, 2004, p. 58). Respected Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid writes:

Pakistan had issued standing instructions to all its embassies abroad to give visas, with no questions asked, to anyone wanting to come and fight with the mujahidin. In the Middle East the Ikhwan ul Muslimeen (Muslim Brotherhood), the Saudi-based World Muslim League, and the Palestinian Islamic radicals organized recruits and put them in contact with the ISI [Pakistani intelligence service]. The ISI and Pakistan’s Jamaat-e-Islami Party set up reception committees to welcome, house, and train the foreign militants ... Then the two encouraged militants to join the mujahidin groups, usually the Hizbe Islami [Hekmatyar’s warriors]. Much of the funding for this enterprise came directly from Saudi Intelligence, which was partly channeled through the Saudi radical Osama bin Laden, who was then based in Peshawar. At the time, French scholar Oliver Roy described the enterprise as “a joint venture between the Saudis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Jamaat-e-Islami, put together by the ISI (Sagdeev & Eisenhower, 2000, p. 214). Milton Bearden, Islamabad CIA station chief from 1986-1989, said of Osama bin Laden, “[He] actually did some very good things ... He put a lot of money in the right places in

Afghanistan” (Coll, 2005, p. 147). In 2002 a report issued by the U.S. Treasury Department would state that Osama bin Laden’s Mujahideen funding efforts “served as the precursor organization to al Qaida” (U.S. Department of Treasury, 2002, para. 11).

Holt commits 152 words on the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan and the U.S. response, Prentice 126, and McGraw 122. Holt mentions no U.S. support for the Mujahideen. McGraw includes U.S. support, but refrains from using the word Mujahideen. Instead, McGraw reports, “Reagan sent hundreds of millions of dollars in covert military aid to Afghan guerillas who were fighting the Soviets” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 661). Only Prentice directly connects the U.S. to the Mujahideen by printing:

Reagan also sought to weaken the Soviet Union by supporting anticommunist rebellions around the globe. To this end, United States funded and trained the mujahedeen (moo jah huh DEEN), anti-Soviet rebels in Afghanistan. Reagan's advisers believed that with U.S. help, these guerillas could drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. In 1988, Soviet forces finally began to withdraw after years of fierce Afghan resistance (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 640).

The geneses of the U.S./Mujahideen nexus originated during the Carter Administration, a fact left unreported by the three texts. Holt simply states that Carter registered his displeasure at the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan by refusing “to fight for the SALT II agreement” (Danzer et al. 2012, p. 815). McGraw explains “Carter responded by imposing an embargo on the sale of grain to the Soviet Union and boycotting the 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 640). Prentice mentions all three actions taken by Carter (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013 p. 616). On Carter’s most significant response to the Soviet action, the three texts are mute. It was Carter, not Reagan, who began financing the Mujahideen (Gates, 1996, p.

146). In a candid interview given to the weekly French news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 1998, Carter's National Security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski states that the Carter administration began funding the Mujahideen six months before the Soviets entered Afghanistan, and that it was known that this early funding was likely to provoke the Soviet incursion (Blum, 1998, p.1). When the French interviewer asked:

When the Soviets justified their intervention by asserting that they intended to fight against secret involvement of the United States in Afghanistan, people didn't believe them. However, there was a basis of truth. You don't regret anything today?

Brzezinski replied:

Regret what? That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it? The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter, in substance: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam war (Blum, 1998, p.1).

In his work, *Holy War, Inc.*, Peter Bergen (2001) quotes Brzezinski as saying that the U.S. finally had a chance to "sow shit in [the Soviet's] backyard" (p. 63).

While McGraw offers no reason for the Soviet action in Afghanistan, Prentice states that the Soviets "invaded the neighboring country of Afghanistan to prop up a tottering communist government," and Holt reports that the Soviet "sent troops" for fear that the Mujahideen would overthrow Afghanistan's "pro-Soviet government" (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 619; Danzer et al. 2012 p. 815). All three texts are remiss for failing to explain Soviet involvement in context of an Afghan civil war. The United States both recognized and had good relations with Afghanistan government from 1921 to 1979 (U.S. Department of State, 2013). Writing for the National Security Archive in 2001, Steve Glaster reported:

In 1976, the annual State Department Policy Review stated that Afghanistan was "a militarily and politically neutral nation, effectively dependent on the Soviet Union." Still, it concluded that the United States "is not, nor should it become, committed to, or responsible for the 'protection' of Afghanistan in any respect." The balance of power in the region favored the United States, and no significant Soviet threat to that balance was seen emanating from Afghanistan (Glaster, 2001, para. 13).

In the years before he was ousted by his cousin in a bloodless coup in 1973, Afghanistan's last ruling monarch had instituted a constitutional monarchy, as well as rights for women in education, employment, and suffrage. Afghanistan's conservative Muslims were not pleased (Bearak, 2007). His successor, Mohammad Daoud Khan, abolished the monarchy and established himself as the head of a republic. He continued to support women's rights and worked to curb Islamic fundamentalism. As a result, many of the fundamentalist crossed the border into Pakistan. One such refugee was Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (Colley, 2011, p.1983). The CIA refers to this time in Afghan's history as, "A brief experiment in democracy" (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013).

South East Asian scholar Selig Harrison (1979) argues that "the tenuous equilibrium that had existed in Afghanistan between the Soviet Union and the West for nearly three decades" began to teeter due to the U.S. backed Shah of Iran's attempts, with U.S. support, to bring the Afghan government into a Western orbit (Harrison, 1979, para. 23). Iran used its brutal secret police (SAVAK), and a conditional 2 billion dollar aid package to put pressure on the Daoud regime to suppress the communist members within his government. Daoud complied and was assassinated by a communist faction in 1978 (Harrison, 1979). Daoud's grandson states, "If you ask any Afghan when did it all start, they will say it is because of that, the assassination of Mr.



Daoud, this was the turning point...The last day that Afghanistan was independent was 27th April, 1978” (Gall, 2009, para. 5). The new leftist government led by Mohammad Taraki welcomed Soviet advisors and continued to push for reform in the Muslim country by redistributing land, promoting literacy, outlawing forced marriages, and encouraging women to abandon the veil (Colley, 2011, p. 1985). It also signed a treaty with Moscow which “allowed the government of Afghanistan to request that the government of the Soviet Union send forces into Afghanistan and provided the legal basis for such an action” (Russia, 2002, p. 10). The Soviet backed leaders busied themselves fighting each other as well as the Pakistani and Iranian backed Mujahideen (Colley, 2011, p. 1985).

In January of 1979 the U.S. lost Iran, “its chief ally and outpost in the Soviet-border region,” with the overthrow of the Shah (Blum, 2004, p. 340). Gone, too, were “its military installations and electronic monitoring stations aimed at the Soviet Union” (Blum, 2004, p. 340). The Mujahideen now had a major head of state in open support of establishing a fundamentalist Islamic government in Afghanistan, Ayatollah Khomeini. Two months later the Mujahideen staged an uprising in the province of Herat following the Taraki government’s call to teach women to read (Coll, 2005, p.38). At least 1,000 persons were killed (The National Security Archive 2001a, p. 4). Afghanistan had descended into a brutal civil war. Taraki made numerous pleas to the Soviets for direct military intervention (Coll, 2005, p. 38). In a secret meeting held on March 17 and 18, 1979, with the top leaders in in the Soviet government, including Soviet Premier Brezhnev, Taraki’s request for Soviet troops was unanimously rejected (The National Security Archive, 2001a, p. 16-21). On March 20 Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin met with Taraki and told him:

If our troops were introduced, the situation in your country would not only not improve, but would worsen. One cannot deny that our troops would have to fight not only with foreign aggressors, but also with a certain number of your people. And people do not forget such things (The National Security Archive, 2001c, p.3).

On September 14, 1979 Taraki was assassinated by his own prime minister, Hafizullah Amin. In his work, *The Afghan Wars*, Rupert Colley (2011) writes that “Amin was universally unpopular - he was hated by the Afghan Islamists, feared by his own party, distrusted by the US and suspected by Moscow of being in the pocket of the CIA” (p. 1985). In fact, Amin had held secret meetings with American diplomats in Kabul, and the KGB warned Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev that Amin may be moving his government into closer alignment with the United States (Coll, 2005, p. 38). Fearing that Afghanistan, which had for years been a cold war buffer-state between East and West, was about to become an enemy of the Soviet Union, Brezhnev approved of the use of Soviet forces inside of Afghanistan to eliminate Amin and install Babrak Karmal, Afghan Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, as the head of the new, Soviet friendly, Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (The National Security Archive, 2001b; Lyakhovsky, 2001).

In a chapter titled *Afghanistan, 1979 – 1992: America’s Jihad*, from his book *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and C.I.A. Interventions Since World War II*, William Blum writes:

One would have to look long and hard at the information and rhetoric offered to the American public following the Soviet intervention to derive even a hint that the civil war was essentially a struggle over deep-seated social reform; while an actual discussion of the issue was virtually non-existent. Prior to the intervention, one could get a taste of this, such as the following from the *New York Times*:

Land reform attempts undermined their village chiefs. Portraits of Lenin threatened their religious leaders. But it was the Kabul revolutionary Government's granting of new rights to women that pushed orthodox Moslem men in the Pashtoon villages of eastern Afghanistan into picking up their guns. ... The government said our women had to attend meetings and our children had to go to schools. This threatens our religion. We had to fight ... The government imposed various ordinances allowing women freedom to marry anyone they chose without their parents' consent (Blum, 2004, p. 346).

After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, the Mujahideen would succeed in establishing Jihadist rule. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar himself, would serve a term as Prime Minister (World Leaders List, n.d). Prentice, Holt, and McGraw's simple Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was not, as we can see, all that simple.

#### The Insult

The story of the first Persian Gulf War, at the time America's "largest military deployment since Vietnam," is crucial to understanding the "war on terror" (Woodward, 1991, p. 36). Like their reporting on the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan, the three texts present the events of the Gulf War without detail, context, or controversy. Perhaps most significant, none of the texts mention the U.S. government's relationship with Saddam Hussein before the invasion of Kuwait.

In a 2002 United Press International article titled *Exclusive: Saddam key in early CIA plot*, UPI intelligence correspondent Richard Sale (2003) writes that "Saddam was seen by U.S. intelligence services as a bulwark of anti-communism and they used him as their instrument for more than 40 years" (p.1). Sale reports that the CIA made its first contact with the future lead or

Iraq in 1959 when Saddam was part of a “CIA-authorized six-man squad tasked with assassinating then Iraqi Prime Minister Gen. Abd al-Karim Qasim,” who the CIA feared was moving toward an alliance with the Soviet Union (p.1). The coup failed, and with the CIA’s help Saddam escaped. He fled to Beirut Lebanon where, according to Sale, the CIA paid for his apartment and “put him through a brief training course” (p.2). From Beirut Saddam moved to Cairo Egypt where he made “frequent visits to the American Embassy” (p.2).

After Qasim was successfully assassinated in 1963, Saddam would later become “head of al-Jihaz a-Khas, the secret intelligence apparatus of the Baath Party” (Sale, 2003, p.2). He became President of Iraq in 1979, just five months after the fall of the Shah’s government in Iran and four months before Iranian revolutionaries took Americans hostage in Tehran.

A top secret memo authored by Reagan’s Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, shows that prior to Saddam’s invasion of Iran on September 22, 1980 - an act which lead to a brutal eight year war between Iraq and Iran costing an estimated 1,500,000 war related casualties - King Fahd of Saudi Arabia told Haig “President Carter gave the Iraqis a green light to launch the war against Iran” (GlobalSecurity.org, 2011; Consortiumnews.com, 2013, p.2). In December of 1983 Donald Rumsfeld, former Secretary of Defense under President Ford, was in Bagdad shaking hands with Saddam Husain on behalf of the Reagan administration in an effort to “resume diplomatic relations” with Iraq (Scahill, 2001, p.1). It was known by the U.S at the time that Iraq was using outlawed chemical weapons against Iran on an “almost daily” basis (Howe, 2003, p.1). In fact, *The Riegle Report*, delivered to Congress in February 1994, chronicled the U.S. sale of pathogens to Iraq between 1985 and 1989. Under the heading *U.S. Exports of Biological Materials to Iraq* the report states:

Records available from the supplier for the period from 1985 until the present show that during this time, pathogenic (meaning "disease producing"), toxigenic (meaning "poisonous"), and other biological research materials were exported to Iraq pursuant to application and licensing by the U.S. Department of Commerce ... These exported biological materials were not attenuated or weakened and were capable of reproduction (Riegle & D'Amato, 1994).

Throughout the eight-year war, the U.S. kept in close contact with Iraq. In a September 2002 issue of Newsweek, Christopher Dickey and Evan Thomas reported that during the war the U.S. sold Iraq helicopters, video surveillance equipment, chemical-analysis equipment, and bacteria/fungi/protozoa (Dickey & Thomas, 2002). In a sworn affidavit for federal court, former member of Reagan's National Security Council, Howard Teicher, reported:

CIA Director Casey personally spearheaded the effort to ensure that Iraq had sufficient military weapons, ammunition and vehicles to avoid losing the Iran-Iraq war. Pursuant to the secret NSDD [National Security Decision Directive signed by Reagan], the United States actively supported the Iraqi war effort by supplying the Iraqis with billions of dollars of credits, by providing U.S. military intelligence and advice to the Iraqis, and by closely monitoring third country arms sales to Iraq to make sure that Iraq had the military weaponry required. The United States also provided strategic operational advice to the Iraqis to better use their assets in combat ... I personally attended meetings in which CIA Director Casey or CIA Deputy Director Gates noted the need for Iraq to have certain weapons such as cluster bombs and anti-armor penetrators in order to stave off the Iranian attacks ... Under CIA Director Casey and Deputy Director Gates, the CIA authorized, approved and assisted Cardoen [a Chilean weapons manufacturer] in the

manufacture and sale of cluster bombs and other munitions to Iraq (Teicher, 1995, p. 2,3,6).

In a meeting with Saddam Hussein eight days before his army crossed the border into Kuwait, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, told him that “President Bush ... wants friendship,” and that the “President had instructed her to broaden and deepen our relations with Iraq” (Glaspie, 1990, para. 21, 22). Glaspie also told the Iraqi leader that she thought American Journalist Diane Sawyer’s recent interview of him, in which Sawyer questioned his policy of executing Iraqis who spoke out against him, was “chep (sic) and unfair” (Glaspie, 1990, para 22; Sawyer, 1990). Two and a half months later the President would charge that Saddam Hussein, an American friend, was a reincarnate of Hitler (Bush, G H.W. 1990, October 15).

McGraw-Hill offers no explanation of why Iraq invaded Kuwait other than the U.S. fear that his “ultimate goal” was to “capture Saudi Arabia and its vast oil reserves” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 668). Prentice Hall states that Iraq invaded “to take over Kuwait’s rich oil deposits” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013 p. 647). Only Holt McDougal offers a semblance of truth by reporting that Iraq had a border dispute with Kuwait and that it was deeply in debt due to the Iran/Iraq war (Danzer et al. p. 853). In a 1992 article titled *The Gulf War Reconsidered*, historian Theodore H. Draper reminds us that the border dividing Kuwait from Iraq was drawn in 1922 by Sir Percy Cox, British High Commissioner for Iraq, while Iraq was a British Protectorate. The new border was marked in 1923 by placing a sign in the desert. Draper quotes Richard Schofield, author of *Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes*, stating: “A full quarter of a century later, British officials were frantically trying to calculate were, precisely, and on what basis the Kuwaiti Political Agent had placed the board in 1923” (p.5). Draper goes on to report that “In December 1991, A UN Iraq/Kuwait Boundary

Demarcation Commission was still trying to rediscover ... [the] ... original spot” (p.5). Writes Schofield:

The suddenness of the [Iraqi] action [ invading Kuwait] and the coverage it has received should not disguise the fact that Iraqi claims to Kuwaiti territory have been pursued with remarkable consistency over the last half-century, through Hashimite and revolutionary rule alike. There is some justification for the argument that, having predated by a considerable length of time the accession of Saddam Hussein to the Iraqi Presidency, these claims will not disappear with a settlement of the present Kuwait Crisis, whether or not this involves a change of regime in Baghdad (p. 6.)

In fact, Saddam himself brings up the border dispute in his 1990 July 25 meeting with U.S. Ambassador Glaspie. From Glaspie’s own memo to the State Department we learn:

On the border question, Saddam referred to the 1961 agreement and a "line of patrol" it had established. the Kuwaitis, he said, had told Mubarak Iraq was 20 kilometers "in front" of this line. The ambassador said that she had served in Kuwait 20 years before; then, as now, we took no position on these Arab affairs”(Glaspie, 1990, para.30).

Under the disputed border lays the large Rumaila oilfield, home at the time, of 225 Iraqi oil wells (Hayes, 1990). In an article published in the New York Times on September 3, 1990 titled *Confrontation in the Gulf; The Oilfield Lying Below the Iraq-Kuwait Dispute*, journalist Thomas Hayes writes, “...[D]uring the Iran war Iraq mined its giant share of the Rumaila field to keep it from falling into Iranian hands, Western political experts say. Kuwait stepped up its total oil production, capturing some of Iraq's customers and pumping millions of barrels from the Rumaila field. After the war with Iran ended in a cease-fire in 1988, Iraq resumed drilling in Rumaila” (p.1). Saddam charged the Kuwaiti’s with stealing 2.4 billion dollars’ worth of oil from the Rumaila field as well as flooding the world oil

market for the past two years by over producing thus keeping the price of oil low. This action, he claimed, was costing Iraq 14 billion dollars a year in lost revenue, funds desperately needed to rebuild his country after years of war with Iran (Hayes, 1990). This complaint, too, was articulated to Glaspie:

Iraq suffered 100,000's of casualties and is now so poor that war orphan pensions will soon be cut; yet rich Kuwait will not even accept OPEC discipline. Iraq is sick of war, but Kuwait has ignored diplomacy... Iraq, the president stressed, is in serious financial difficulties, with 40 billion USD debts ... [t]hose who force oil prices down are engaging in economic warfare and Iraq cannot accept such a trespass on its dignity and prosperity ... "how can we make them (Kuwait and UAE) understand how deeply we are suffering" (Glaspie, 1990, para. 2,6,8,25).

Hayes writes:

Kuwait's overall production in 1989, an average of 1.8 million barrels a day, exceeded its OPEC quota by 700,000 barrels. The Kuwaiti Government's hope was to force Mr. Hussein to the bargaining table, and then extract from him a border truce that included Rumaila drilling rights, as well as a non-aggression pact. Instead, Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait and drove its ruling family into exile. . . Henry M. Schuler, director of the energy security program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said that, from the Iraqi viewpoint, the Kuwait Government was "acting aggressively - it was economic warfare. Whether he's Hitler or not, he has some reason on his side," Mr. Schuler said of President Hussein. He added that American officials needed to appreciate the economic and psychological significance the Rumaila field holds for the Iraqis and why Kuwait's exploitation of Rumaila, in addition to its high oil output in the 1980's, was an affront to the Iraqis (p.1).



In Glaspie's memo, Saddam accuses the U.S. of supporting the Kuwaiti overproduction of oil by stating, "You want the oil prices down" (para. 6). Throughout the memo Glaspie records Saddam's warning to the U.S. government that, "If Iraq is publically humiliated by the USG, it will have no choice but to 'respond,' however illogical and self destructive that would prove" (para. 2). Glaspie records the following:

Saddam said he fully believes the USG wants peace, and that is good. But do not, he asked, use methods which you say you do not like, methods like arm-twisting ... Iraq will have to respond if the U.S.. uses these methods. Iraq knows the USG can send planes and rockets and hurt Iraq deeply. Saddam asks that the USG not force Iraq to the point of humiliation at which logic must be disregarded. Iraq does not consider the U.S. an enemy and has tried to be friends... Saddam said that the Iraqis know what war is, want no more of it--"do not push us to it; do not make it the only option left with which we can protect our dignity."... comment: in the memory of the current diplomatic corps, Saddam has never summoned an ambassador. He is worried. According to his own political theorizing (U.S. the sole major power in the middle east), he needs at a minimum a correct relationship with us for obvious geopolitical reasons, especially as long as he perceives mortal threats from Israel and Iran. Ambassador believes Saddam suspects our decision suddenly to undertake maneuvers with Abu Dhabi is a harbinger of a USG decision to take sides. Further, Saddam, himself beginning to have an inkling of how much he does not understand about the U.S. is apprehensive that we do not understand certain political factors which inhibit him, such as: --he cannot allow himself to be perceived as caving in to superpower bullying (as u/s Hamdun frankly warned us in late 1988); --Iraq, which lost 100,000's of casualties, is suffering and Kuwait is "miserly" and "selfish." it was

progress to have Saddam admit that the USG has a "responsibility" in the region, and has every right to expect an answer when we ask Iraq's intentions. His response in effect that he tried various diplomatic/channels before resorting to unadulterated intimidation has at least the virtue of frankness. His emphasis that he wants peaceful settlement is surely sincere (Iraqis are sick of war), but the terms sound difficult to achieve. Saddam seems to want pledges now on oil prices and production to cover the next several months (Glaspie, 1990, para. 13,14,17,31,32).

Eight days after the invasion of Kuwait, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tarik Aziz confronted Kuwait's exiled Foreign Minister at an Arab Summit held in Cairo threatening "to disclose the contents of conversations and documents revealing communication between the Kuwaiti minister's office and the Central Intelligence Agency about how to deal with Iraq" (Boustany, 1990, p.2 ). The Kuwaiti minister fainted (Murphy, 1990, p.1). On October 30, 1990, Iraqi Ambassador Mohammed Mashat presented a memo to the United Nations said to be from "Brig. Fahd Ahmad Fahd, the director general of state security in Kuwait's now-deposed government, to his boss, Interior Minister Salim al Sabah al Sabah" which he said proves "an economic conspiracy aimed at destroying our economy" (Kempster, 1990, p.1 ). The memo dated November 14, 1989 described Ahmad Fahd's meeting in Washington with the director of the CIA, William Webster. It read, in part:

We agreed with the American side that it was important to take advantage of the deteriorating economic situation in Iraq in order to put pressure on that country's government to delineate our common border. The Central Intelligence Agency gave us its view of appropriate means of pressure, saying that broad cooperation should be

initiated between us, on condition that such activities are coordinated at a high level (Blum, 2004, p.322).

Though the CIA and George H.W. Bush's Whitehouse admit that Ahmad Fahd did, in fact, meet with director Webster, they describe it a "routine courtesy call" (The White House 2013). Both claim the memo, which was supposedly acquired by the Iraqi's from captured Kuwaiti "intelligence files" to be a fake (para. 8). Los Angeles Times journalist Norman Kempster writes, "The memo is not an obvious forgery, particularly since if Iraqi officials had written it themselves, they almost certainly would have made it far more damaging to U.S. and Kuwaiti credibility" (Kempster, 1990, November 1, p.1).

Prentice Hall states that "President Bush made clear that he would not tolerate Iraq's aggression against its neighbor" (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 647). As previously discussed, on July 25, 1990 April Glaspie suggested otherwise. So did State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutweiler. On July 24 she publically stated that the U.S. does "not have any defense treaty with Kuwait, and there are no special defense or security commitments with Kuwait" (Blum, 2004, p. 322). On July 31, two days before the invasion, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, John Kelly, testified before Congress that "We have no defense treaty relationship with any Gulf country" (p. 322). When asked by Representative Lee Hamilton if it was correct to assume that if Iraq invaded Kuwait the U.S. was under no obligation to come to Kuwait's defense Kelly replied, "That is correct." (p. 322).

As previously stated, Holt's claim that after the Iraqis had invaded Kuwait "they headed toward Saudi Arabia and its oil fields" is untrue" (Danzer et al. 2012, p.853). Prentice records that "nearby Saudi Arabia possessed even more massive oil reserves" and that "[t]he United States did not want Hussein to seek to gain control of those reserves next (Lapsansky-Werner et

al. 2013, p. 647). McGraw prints that “U.S. officials feared that that the invasion might only be the first step and that Iraq’s ultimate goal was to capture Saudi Arabia and its vast oil reserves” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 669). However, on August 7, King Fahd “sent an envoy to assure King Hussein [of Jordan] that relations between Riyadh and Baghdad were fine, that there was no evidence of a hostile Iraqi buildup on the border, and that despite American assertions, there was no truth to reports that Iraq planned to invade Saudi Arabia” (Miller, 1990, October 16, p.4 ). Saddam himself told April Glaspie on July 25 that “he understands that the USG is determined to keep the oil flowing and to maintain its friendships in the gulf” (Glaspie, 1990, para. 12 ). The U.S. friendship with Saudi Arabia is long one. In a 1992 Washington Post article titled *Secret Presidential Pledges Over Years Erected U.S. Shield for Saudis*, Walter Pincus writes:

In 1950 Ibn Saud asked Truman for a formal military treaty. In response, Truman sent Assistant Secretary of State George McGhee to Saudi Arabia to establish a military aid program that continues to this day. McGhee told Ibn Saud that although the United States "could not consider the conclusion of an old-style treaty of alliance," he "would like to suggest certain other means which should achieve virtually the same end," according to a memo in the Truman Library. McGhee told the king that "the United States . . . will take most immediate action at any time that the integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia is threatened." The king, evidently pleased, closed the meeting by saying he wished "it to be understood that he considered the United States and Saudi [Arabia] as one state” (Pincus, 1992, February 9, p. 3).

In a 2010 congressional report titled *Saudi Arabia: Background and U.S. Relations*, analyst in Middle Eastern affairs Christopher M. Blanchard states:

The United States has long been Saudi Arabia's leading arms supplier. From 1950 through 2006, Saudi Arabia purchased and received from the United States weapons, military equipment, and related services through Foreign Military Sales (FMS) worth over \$62.7 billion and foreign military construction services (FMCS) worth over \$17.1 billion (figures in historical dollars). These figures represent approximately 19% of all FMS deliveries and 85% of all FMCS deliveries made worldwide during this period (Blanchard, 2010, p. 19).

In fact, in 2010 the U.S. commenced the largest arms sale in history when it sold the Saudi government more than 60 billion dollars' worth of weapons (Mulrine, 2010, September 2, p.1).

Clearly, the Iraqi President knew that Saudi oil was off limits. In an article titled *The Persian Gulf TV War Revisited*, Columbia University professor Douglas Kellner (2004) writes:

The disinformation campaign that legitimated the U.S. sending troops to Saudi Arabia began working through the Washington Post on August 7, 1990, the same day Bush announced that he was sending U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia. In a front page story by Patrick Tyler, the Post claimed that in a previous day's meeting between the U.S. Charge D'affairs, Joseph Wilson, and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader was highly belligerent, claiming that Kuwait was part of Iraq, that no negotiation was possible, that he would invade Saudi Arabia if they cut off the oil pipes which delivered Iraqi oil across Saudi territory to the Gulf, and that American blood would flow in the sand if the U.S. sent troops to the region. A later transcript of the Wilson-Hussein meeting revealed, however, that Hussein was cordial, indicated a willingness to negotiate, insisted that he had no intention of invading Saudi Arabia, and opened the doors for a diplomatic solution to the crisis.

The Post, story, however, was taken up by the television networks, wire services, and press,

producing an image that there was no possibility of a diplomatic solution and that decisive action was needed to protect Saudi Arabia from the aggressive Iraqis. Such a story line legitimated the sending of U.S. troops to the Gulf and provided a perfect justification for Bush's intervention in the region (Kellner, 2004, p.2).

Jean Heller's satellite photos showed that Iraqi troops weren't amassing on the Saudi border; King Fahd's own military reconnaissance said they weren't there; and Powell, himself, stated after the invasion of Kuwait, "I was reasonably sure that the Iraqi's had not yet decided to invade Saudi Arabia. I was also confident that they did not relish a war with the United States" (Woodward, 1991, p. 258; Powell & Persico, 1995, p.464).

If Saddam Hussein's goal was not Saudi Oil, what did he hope to gain by taking Kuwait? King Hussein of Jordan (an American ally), who worked for months to peacefully resolve the Kuwaiti/Iraqi dispute, and had access to President Bush, reported to the New York Times on October 16, 1990 that Saddam "had told him that he had decided to seize all of Kuwait, instead of the part of the territory long in dispute, because he expected the United States to defend the emirate with force, and believed he would be in stronger position militarily and politically if he could eventually withdraw to a point that left Iraq with the disputed territory only" (Miller, 1990, October 16, p.2). The King of Jordan went on to report that Saddam began making withdrawal overtures immediately after the invasion but that there was an "embargo on dialogue" (p. 1). The King told The Times, "If war comes ... it will be partly because of a failure by President Bush and other Western leaders to respond in time to signals from the Iraqi leader, soon after the Kuwait invasion, that he was ready to withdraw from most of the occupied territory... If it's a question of humiliation and surrender, it won't work ... Capitulation is unacceptable" (p. 1).

Glaspie and the U.S. State Department already knew this (Glaspie, 1990, July 25).

After an August 4 meeting at Camp David to discuss the logistics of landing troops in Saudi Arabia to ostensibly dissuade Saddam from invading the kingdom, Bush surprised the highest-ranking military officer in his armed forces, Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Colin Powell, by stating to reporters on August 5 that “I view very seriously our determination to reverse out this aggression...This will not stand. This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait” (Bush, G.H.W. 1990, August 5, para. 40 ). In his autobiography Powell writes, “I sat upright. From ‘We’re not discussing intervention’ to ‘This will not stand’ marked a giant step. Had the President just committed the United States to liberating Kuwait?” (Powell & Persico, 1995, p.466). Bob Woodward writes:

There had been no in NSC meeting, no debate. The Chairman could not understand why the President had laid down this new marker, changing radically the definition of success. It was one thing to stop Saddam from going into other countries like Saudi Arabia; it was very much another thing to reverse an invasion that was accomplished. In military terms, it was night and day (Woodward, 1991, p. 261).

Whether deterrence or war, Bush and his National Security team’s plan revolved around putting troops in Islam’s most holy land; Saudi Arabia. In an address to the American people the President stated, “[A]fter consulting with King Fahd, I sent Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney to discuss cooperative measures we could take. Following those meetings, the Saudi Government requested our help, and I responded to that request by ordering U.S. air and ground forces to deploy to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia” (Bush G.H.W., 1990, August 8, para. 13). It was, in fact, the U.S. that requested the use of Saudi land. In his autobiography, Colin Powell states that at an NSC meeting held on August 3 he told the President, “[I]t’s important to plant the

American flag in the Saudi desert as soon as possible, assuming we can get their okay” (Powell & Persico, 1995, p. 464). In his autobiography Cheney writes of the same meeting:

It was clear that Scowcroft was about where I was. There was simply too much at stake, he said, for us to acquiesce in the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. We needed forces in the area, and Saudi Arabia was the logical place, but, as I noted in the meeting, they have been traditionally reluctant to have an American presence on their soil (Cheney & Cheney, 2011, p. 186).

On August 4 General Schwarzkopf briefed the President on a military response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait. He told the President that “we would need Saudi Arabia’s cooperation to execute such a plan, since it depended on the use of their airfields and harbors” (Schwarzkopf & Petre, 1992, p. 301). After this meeting Bush placed a call to the King. Woodward writes, “It was time for some pressure. Bush told the King that Saddam was piling up forces near the King’s border. The Saudis had to act” (Woodward, 1991, p. 254). King Hussein of Jordan stated that he learned in a meeting with British Prime Minister Thatcher that “the United States troops were ‘halfway to Saudi Arabia’ before they were formally requested. The King said he had confirmed this later through what he described as his own sources” (Miller, 1990, p. 3). On August 6, 1990, King Fahd gave his approval to hosting the largest U.S. military deployment since the Vietnam War. Saudi national Osama bin Laden took notice.

#### Babies then Bombs

After landing American troops in Saudi Arabia the President took to publically demonizing Saddam Hussein. Three months before the first American bombs fell on Baghdad, he told an audience in Texas:



Every day now, new word filters out about the ghastly atrocities perpetrated by Saddam's forces: eyewitness accounts of the cruel and senseless suffering endured by the people of Kuwait, of a systematic assault on the soul of a nation, summary executions, routine torture. Under the forces of Iraqi occupation, we are told that mere possession of the Kuwaiti flag or a photograph of the Kuwait's Amir are crimes punishable by death. And last month at the White House, I met with the Amir of Kuwait. And I heard horrible tales: Newborn babies thrown out of incubators and the incubators then shipped off to Baghdad. Dialysis patients ripped from their machines, and those machines then, too, sent off to Baghdad. The story of two young kids passing out leaflets: Iraqi troops rounded up their parents and made them watch while those two kids were shot to death -- executed before their eyes. Hitler revisited. But remember, when Hitler's war ended, there were the Nuremberg trials (Bush G.H.W., 1990, October 15, para. 26).

The President would tell the “incubator story” more than once. The problem was that it was a lie. The Kuwaitis had paid Hill and Knowlton, the world’s largest PR firm, over \$10 million to convince the American people the need for war (Stauber & Rampton, 2002). The firm used the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to the U.S. to pose as a 15 year-old girl named “Nayirah” whose last name had to be kept a secret to protect her family back in Kuwait. Testifying on Capital Hill before an organization named the Congressional Human Rights Caucus – a private organization of politicians that had no governmental oversight or authority - Nayirah tearfully told two of the caucus’s founding members, along with the invited guests and press, that she witnessed “Iraqi soldiers come into the hospital [where she worked as a volunteer] with guns, and go into the room where babies were in incubators. They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators, and left the babies on the cold floor to die”

(Stauber & Rampton, 2002, p. 3). The Ambassador was present to watch his daughter's performance. She had been coached by Hill and Knowlton's own vice president, and the executive in charge of the Kuwaiti account served as George H.W. Bush's chief of staff when he was vice-president. The office for the Congressional Human Rights Caucus? In the Hill and Knowlton building (Stauber & Rampton, 2002). In their 2002 book *Toxic Sludge is Good for You: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry*, Stauber and Rampton write:

Three months passed between Nayirah's testimony and the start of the war. During those months, the story of babies torn from their incubators was repeated over and over again. President Bush told the story. It was recited as fact in Congressional testimony, on TV and radio talk shows, and at the UN Security Council. "Of all the accusations made against the dictator," MacArthur [author of *Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the Gulf War*] observed, "none had more impact on American public opinion than the one about Iraqi soldiers removing 312 babies from their incubators and leaving them to die on the cold hospital floors of Kuwait City" ... On January 12, the US Senate voted by a narrow, five-vote margin to support the Bush administration in a declaration of war. Given the narrowness of the vote, the babies-thrown-from-incubators story may have turned the tide in Bush's favor (p. 4).

One hundred and seventy-seven million pounds of bombs were dropped on Iraq in what William Blum termed at the time "the most concentrated aerial onslaught in the history of the world" (Blum, 2004, p. 320; Walker, 1992, p. 2). Holt simply states that there was "a massive air assault," and Prentice, "a devastating aerial bombardment" (Danzer et al. 2012, p. 855; Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 649). Both neglect to mention that the Gulf war was the first conflict in history broadcast live around the globe. This 24 hour news coverage changed the way

images of war were delivered to the public. The Pentagon introduced the “smart bomb” to the American lexicon and produced video after video, narrated by American commanders, showcasing weapons that had pinpoint accuracy. McGraw records that the war opened with “Cruise missiles and laser-guided bombs ...destroying [Iraq’s] air defenses, bridges, artillery, and other military targets” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 670). Note “bridges” are listed as a “military target.” In a 1991 report titled, *U.S. Bombing: The Myth of Surgical Bombing in the Gulf War*, Paul Walker, director of the Institute for Peace and International Security at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, writes:

The total number of bombs dropped by allied forces in the war comes to about 250,000. Of these only 22,000 were the so-called "smart bombs" or guided bombs... What all of this means to anyone who thinks about the numbers is simply that the bombing was not a series of surgical strikes but rather an old fashioned mass destruction. On March 15, 1991, the Air Force released information stating that 93.6% of the tonnage dropped were traditional unguided bombs. So we have something like 82,000 tons of bombs that were non-precision guided and only 7,000 tons of guided bombs. This is not surgical warfare in any accurate sense of the term and more importantly in the sense that was commonly understood by the American public (Walker, 1992, p. 2, 4 ).

This, of course, gives the adjectives “massive” and “devastating” used by Holt and Prentice some context, and McGraw some perspective.

### The Fatwa

Incredibly, neither Holt nor McGraw offer any explanation as to why Osama bin Laden was angry with America. Both open their 9/11 dialogues by describing the destruction of the Twin Towers, but never ascribe a motive for that destruction. The event just happens. Prentice is

an exception. Two pages before addressing 9/11, Osama bin Laden is introduced under the subheading *Dealing With Terrorism*. It states, “Bin Laden had fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s on the side of Islamic fundamentalists who sought to expel the Soviet Union. By the 1990s, he had formed al Qaeda with the purpose of ending American involvement in Muslim countries” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 670). Later it records, “Bin Laden opposed the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia, the U.S. economic boycott against Iraq, and U.S. support for Israel” (p. 674). In his 1996 Fatwa titled *Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places*, bin Laden stated:

[T]here is no more important duty than pushing the American enemy out of the holy land ...It is out of date and no longer acceptable to claim that the presence of the crusaders is necessity and only a temporary measures [sic] to protect the land of the two Holy Places...The youths hold you responsible for all of the killings and evictions of the Muslims and the violation of the sanctities, carried out by your Zionist brothers in Lebanon; you openly supplied them with arms and finance. More than 600,000 Iraqi children have died due to lack of food and medicine and as a result of the unjustifiable aggression (sanction) imposed on Iraq and its nation. The children of Iraq are our children. You, the USA, together with the Saudi regime are responsible for the shedding of the blood of these innocent children. Due to all of that, whatever treaty you have with our country is now null and void (bin Laden, 1996, August 23, p.3,5,9).

In an October 2001 interview he would again bring up the death of Iraqi children and add that “children are being killed in Palestine” (CNN, 2002 February 5, p. 3). He went on to state, “We swore that America wouldn't live in security until we live it truly in Palestine...America

won't get out of this crisis until it gets out of the Arabian Peninsula, and until it stops its support of Israel” (p.5).

Although Prentice accurately lists three of Bin Laden’s complaints against the U.S., it provides little or no context for those complaints. On U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia it simply states that “500,000 American forces” assembled there as part of Operation Desert Storm (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 649). As for U.S. sanctions against Iraq, it reports, “Initially, Bush hoped that the presence of these troops, along with the economic sanctions against Iraq, would convince Hussein to withdraw his soldiers” (p. 649). And while it states on page 385 that “when the Jewish community in Palestine proclaimed the State of Israel ...[t]he United states became perhaps [its] staunchest ally ...,” nowhere in its 800 pages does it explain, or even record, that such support created controversy in the Muslim world. In fact, Prentice never addresses why any Arab state harbors animosity towards Israel.

#### Fatwa Context

Soon after Kuwait was invaded by Iraq, bin Laden met with the Saudi defense minister and offered to lead a force of 100,000 Mujahideen fighters to expel the Iraqi’s from Kuwait so that Saudi Arabia “could avoid the indignity of allowing an army of American unbelievers to enter the kingdom” (Jehl, 2001, December 7, p. 5). His offer was rejected setting the stage for his animosity towards the United States and the rulers of his homeland.

In 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon with the objective of destroying the Palestinian government in exile (Maoz, 2006, p. 181 ). They did this with U.S. support, U.S. weapons, and U.S. ammunition (Comer, 1995). Around 650 Israelis were killed while the casualty estimates for Lebanese and Palestinians run as high as 20,000 (Necrometrics.com, 2012, February).

In 1996, U.S. Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright was asked about the U.S. sanctions imposed on Iraq after the Gulf war. Journalist Lesley Stahl asked, "We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?" Albright replied, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price-- we think the price is worth it" (Mahajan, 2001, November 1, p.1).

According to Project Ploughshares:

Three wars, in 1948, 1967 and 1973, killed an estimated 100,000 people. From December 1987 to 1992, a popular Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories, the intifada, claimed more than 1,500, mostly Palestinian, lives. More than 12,000 people, including 500 Israelis, died in the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978 and 1982. An estimated 2,600 Palestinians and 800 Israelis died between September 2000 and September 2003 (Ploughshares, 2012, para. 47).

According to a report issued by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, between September 2000 until the end of July 2007, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has cost the lives of 4,228 Palestinians and 1,024 Israelis. Of the total number of children killed during this period, 88% were Palestinian and 12% were Israeli.

A 2006 report by the think tank Foreign Policy in Focus stated:

The United States is the primary source of Israel's far superior arsenal. For more than 30 years, Israel had been the largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance and since 1985 Jerusalem has received about \$3 billion in military and economic aid each year from Washington. U.S. aid accounts for more than 20% of Israel's total defense budget (Berrigan & Hartung 2006, p.1).

In his post 9/11 interview Osama bin Laden said, “Jihad is a duty to liberate Al-Aqsa [Jerusalem], and to help the powerless in Palestine, Iraq and Lebanon and in every Muslim country. There is no doubt that the liberation of the Arabian Peninsula from infidels is a duty as well” (CNN, 2002, February 5. p. 3).

Incredibly, McGraw never identifies bin Laden as a Saudi, and none of the three textbooks see fit to mention that 15 out of the 19 September eleventh hijackers were also Saudi nationals. Prentice and McGraw never identify the number of men involved in the hijackings and respectively refer to them as “terrorists” and “hijackers” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 696; Appleby et al. p. 2014, 673). Holt identifies them as “nineteen Arab terrorists” (Danzer et al. 2012, p. 894).

#### The U.S. Starts a War

The United States commenced its longest war on October 7, 2001 by bombing Afghanistan. At this writing, the war has lasted 11 years, 8 months, 2 weeks and 5 days. All three texts cite the reason for the attack on Afghanistan was because Osama bin Laden, whom the U.S. government had determined was behind the September 11 attacks, resided there. All three report that the attack occurred after President Bush demanded that the Afghan government hand over Osama bin Laden. While McGraw is mute regarding the Afghani response, both Holt and Prentice emphatically state the Afghanis “refused” (Danzer et al. 2012, p. 896; Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 674). In fact, prior to the U.S. bombing the Afghani government said that before it would consider extraditing bin Laden it would like the U.S. Government to submit evidence of his guilt. The President rejected the request (CNN, 2001, October 2). After a week of bombing the Afghani government stated if the U.S. stopped its air campaign and presented evidence for bin Laden’s guilt, the government “would be ready to hand him over to a third

country” (Guardian, 2001, October 14, p.1). The President responded, “There's no need to discuss innocence or guilt. We know he's guilty” (p.1). After the second week of bombing the Afghans dropped their request for proof and offered to hand bin Laden over to a third country if the U.S. bombing campaign ceased. Once again, the U.S. refused (McCarthy, 2001, October 16, p.1). After five months of bombing, the civilian death toll in Afghanistan matched that of 9/11 (Herold, 2002).

Only McGraw-Hill uses the word “war” to describe the invasion of Afghanistan; Holt refers it to “a military action,” and Prentice refers to it as a “military presence” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 699; Danzer et al. 2012, p. 896; Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 677).

Although all three texts acknowledge that bin Laden eluded capture – which was, of course, a major objective of the war – all include passages that lead readers to believe that the invasion had a positive outcome. Prentice records, “In 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan and toppled the Taliban government, ending Taliban support for terrorism. Since then, the United States has helped to rebuild Afghanistan” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 558). Holt states that “the Bush administration gained widespread public approval for the decisive steps taken...Bush also scored a major success when direct elections were held for the first time in Afghanistan in October 2004... Although Afghanistan still faced many problems, the elections were considered a positive move toward resolving them” (Danzer et al. 2012, p.867). McGraw reports, “The U.S. bombing campaign quickly shattered the Taliban’s defenses...In December 2001, the Taliban government fell, and surviving members fled to the mountains. Afghanistan slowly began to recover from decades of war” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 699).



According to a 2012 report by Human Rights Watch regarding events in Afghanistan in 2011, “Armed conflict with the Taliban and other insurgents escalated in 2011” (Human Rights Watch, 2011, p.1). The report goes on to say:

Rising civilian casualties, increased use of “night raids” by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and abuses by insurgents and government-backed militias widened the impact of the war on ordinary Afghans. Stability was further undermined by a political crisis following parliamentary elections and panic caused by the near-collapse of the country’s largest private bank. The Afghan government continues to give free rein to well-known warlords and human rights abusers as well as corrupt politicians and businesspeople, further eroding public support. And it has done far too little to address longstanding torture and abuse in prisons and widespread violations of women’s rights (p.1).

How would a reader of these three current textbooks know that a war was still being waged in Afghanistan? Without a careful read between the lines, he or she wouldn’t. After stating earlier that the U.S. had ended “Taliban support for terrorism,” Prentice goes on to print, “American and allied troops had gone into Afghanistan shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but they had never rid the country of the Taliban forces that supported Osama bin Laden. Now, Obama asserted, American forces would focus on the Taliban in Afghanistan and their allies in Pakistan” (Lapsansky-Werner et al. 2013, p. 677). In a paragraph under the subheading titled *Rebuilding Afghanistan*, McGraw includes, “Despite these successes, Afghanistan continued to suffer from violence. The U.S. military has remained in Afghanistan in an effort to help stabilize the country” (Appleby et al. 2014, p. 699). Holt states, “Since 2005, insurgent attacks by Taliban and al Qaeda militants have posed a continuing threat” (Danzon et al. 2012, p. 896). Pieced

together, the three texts tell us that the U.S. military “remains in Afghanistan” to help “stabilize” the country by “focusing on” the “continuing threat” posed by “Taliban and al Qaeda militants.” No mention of killing and dying. No mention of war.

On page 896, Holt McDougal writes that the U.S. government “determined that Osama bin Laden ...directed the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks” after it had conducted “a massive investigation” (Danzer et al. 2012). McGraw-Hill writes on page 696 that bin Laden was “identified” as one of the “plotters behind the attacks” (Appleby et al. 2014). On page 677, Prentice Hall identifies bin Laden as “the mastermind behind the 9/11 terrorists attacks” (Lapsansky-Werner et al.2013). Massive investigation! Plotter! Mastermind! The formal evidence? There isn’t any. On June 5, 2006, Ed Haas, the editor of the *Muckracker Report*, contacted the FBI’s Chief of Investigative Publicity, Rex Tomb, to ask why 9/11 did not appear on the FBI’s Most Wanted web page for Osama bin Laden. Tomb replied, “The reason why 9/11 is not mentioned on Osama Bin Laden’s Most Wanted page is because the FBI has no hard evidence connecting Bin Laden to 9/11.” Haas inquired, “How [is] this possible?” Tomb answered, “Bin Laden has not been formally charged in connection to 9/11.” Haas asked, “How does that work?” Tomb said:

The FBI gathers evidence. Once evidence is gathered, it is turned over to the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice then decides whether it has enough evidence to present to a federal grand jury. In the case of the 1998 United States Embassies being bombed, Bin Laden has been formally indicted and charged by a grand jury. He has not been formally indicted and charged in connection with 9/11 because the FBI has no hard evidence connected Bin Laden to 9/11 (Haas, 2006, June 5, p. 1).

On June 17, 2011, following the death of Osama bin Laden, the U.S. government dismissed all criminal charges against him. The 9/11 charges of conspiracy; attacking civilians; attacking civilian objects; intentionally causing serious bodily injury; murder in violation of the law of war; destruction of property in violation of the law of war; hijacking or hazarding a vessel or aircraft; and terrorism, were not among the charges dropped. Because of the lack of evidence, Osama bin Laden had never been charged for such crimes (Balderson, 2011; Military Commissions, 2013; Sorcher, 2011).

#### Summary of Major Findings

As demonstrated above, all three textbooks in this study fail to give an accurate portrayal of the origins of the “war on terror.” Even were we to combine the narratives of the three, one would be lead to believe that the war’s origins were the result on one man’s dislike of the American government. Restricting ourselves to information printed in the Holt, McGraw, and Prentice textbooks, one could construct the following summary:

America’s war on terror began on began on September 11, 2001 when 19 Arab terrorists hijacked four American jetliners and flew two of them into the World Trade Center in New York City and a third into the side of the Pentagon in Washington DC. As a result, the Twin Towers of the WTC collapsed and the Pentagon was severely damaged. An attack by the fourth plane was thwarted and crashed into a Pennsylvania field when the passengers attempted to wrest control of the aircraft away from the hijackers. An investigation by the American government determined that a Saudi millionaire named Osama bin Laden and members of his terrorist organization called al-Qaeda were responsible. After fighting alongside Muslim fundamentalist in the early 80s to expel the Soviet army from its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, bin Laden formed al-Qaeda for the purpose of ending American involvement in Muslim countries. He was particularly upset

with the United States for supporting the state of Israel, locating American troops in Saudi Arabia, a leading an embargo against Iraq. Prior to the attack on 9/11, bin Laden's terrorist network bombed the WTC in 1993, the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the American warship USS Cole anchored in Yemen. At the time of the 2001 attack, bin Laden was residing in Afghanistan. The American president demanded that the Afghani government, run by a fundamentalist Muslim group known as the Taliban, turn bin Laden over to the United States. The Taliban refused. As a result, the President sent in the U.S. military to topple the Taliban government and attempt to capture Osama bin Laden.

As this paper demonstrates, an alternative narrative could easily be constructed from an abundance of sources all available to the publishers and authors of Holt, McGraw, and Prentice.

It could read:

America's "war on terror" has its origins in the Carter administration's support for a band of brutal Islamic fundamentalists known as the Mujahideen. Fighting to overthrow the Afghani government's support of educational and marriage rights for women, the Mujahideen embroiled Afghanistan in a brutal civil war. Fearing that the socialist Afghani government was falling into the communist orbit of the Soviet Union, the Carter administration began to funnel monetary support to the Mujahideen knowing that such aide was likely to induce Soviet intervention. Though the Soviets were reluctant to intervene in Afghan's civil war, fearing that a Mujahideen victory would create a U.S. client state along its thousand mile border, the Soviet army crossed into Afghanistan at the request of the Afghani government in 1979. For the next ten years the Soviets fought the U.S backed Mujahideen for control of Afghanistan. During this war, an Islamic

fundamentalist named Osama bin Laden, the son of a Saudi millionaire, was recruited by the Mujahideen to help defeat the Soviets. The United States government welcomed bin Laden to the cause and allowed him to set up Mujahideen recruiting centers in the U.S. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, the Mujahideen set up an Islamic government in Afghanistan that nullified rights given to women that were supported by the Soviets. After a series of internal struggles this government would become known as the Taliban. Osama bin Laden was able to parley the respect of the Mujahideen fighters in to forming his own Islamic army called al-Qaeda. Bin Laden became disillusioned with his former ally, the United States, when its President, George H. W. Bush used Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as a pretext to fraudulently station a huge American military force in his homeland of Saudi Arabia in 1990. He then took up a cause against America. In 1993 members of his al-Qaeda organization bombed the World Trade Center. In 1998 the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed, as well as the American warship USS Cole anchored in Yemen. That same year, bin Laden formally declared Jihad (a holy war) against America citing its military and political support for Israel, a Jewish state established in Palestinian homeland in 1948. For forty years Israel had used its military superiority, maintained by the supply of U.S. weapons, against the Palestinians who claimed that the Israelis occupied their land illegally. For every Israeli killed in the resulting conflicts, four Palestinians lost their lives. Bin Laden also took cause against the United States government for its devastating embargo against Iraq which the U.S. tacitly admitted cost the lives of a half a million Iraqi children. Bin Laden claimed that his holy war would continue against America until the United States removed its presence from Saudi Arabia and the Palestinians were free of Israeli

oppression. On September 11, 2001 nineteen terrorists hijacked four American jetliners and flew two of them into the World Trade Center in New York City and a third into the side of the Pentagon in Washington DC. As a result, the twin towers of the WTC collapsed and the Pentagon was severely damaged. An attack by the fourth plane was thwarted and crashed into a Pennsylvania field when the passengers attempted to wrest control of the aircraft away from the hijackers. Fifteen of the nineteen hijackers were Saudi nationals. Within hours the American President, George W. Bush, the son of George H.W. Bush, adopted the phrase “war on terror” coined in 1983 by President Ronald, who his father had served as vice president. Reagan, who had continued President Carter’s support for the Mujahideen during his two terms as president, even sitting down in the oval office with a number of the warriors, whom he referred to as “freedom fighters,” had his administration condemned by the world court for using terrorism against the people of Nicaragua. Within days of the attack, the Bush administration claimed that Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda were responsible for the carnage. Bin Laden, at the time, was residing in Afghanistan as a guest of the Taliban government. President Bush demanded the Taliban hand over bin Laden to the United States. The Taliban government asked Bush for evidence of bin Laden’s guilt. The President refused to offer any and commenced a massive bombing attack on Afghanistan on October 7, 2001.

## Chapter 5 Discussion

### Major Findings

#### *War on Terror*

Although the logical construction of the phrase “war on terror” can be and has been called into question by scholars and politicians, not to mention astute lay people, the textbooks use it without question or controversy. The phrase “war on terror” was adopted as an agenda by the president the very day of the September 11 attacks before any evidence or motives for the crimes were known, yet none of the textbooks see fit to mention this fact. Although there is a rich history on the origin of the phrase “war on terror,” a phrase which has shaped America’s foreign policy for over a decade, that history is ignored.

#### *Bush Doctrine, Mujahideen, Reagan Administration*

The three texts never address the “Bush Doctrine”, pre-emptive war, which was first articulated by the Reagan administration. The Mujahideen, whom the U.S. supported, routinely engaged in acts of terrorism with the full knowledge of the U.S. government. On this, the textbooks are mute. The Reagan administration, that coined the phrase “war against terrorism,” was found guilty of war crimes by the International Court of Justice for its support of terrorism against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua; a fact ignored by all three texts. The three texts all adopt different definitions of terrorism and present them as definitive. None point out that different official definitions exist.

Osama bin Laden was a known and welcomed asset in the United States' struggle to evict the Soviet army from Afghanistan in the 1980s. He was even allowed to operate Mujahideen recruiting centers in the U.S. Information ignored by the three texts.

The Carter Administration began funding the Mujahideen with foreknowledge that such an action might lead to a Soviet invasion. The texts omit this fact and ascribe the United States relationship with Mujahideen as beginning under the Reagan Administration.

### *Afghanistan*

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had its roots in an Afghan civil war, a fact wholly ignored by the texts. The government that ruled Afghanistan before the Mujahideen advocated rights for women. The Mujahideen opposed these rights. During the occupation of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union supported rights for women. The Soviet Union had a security treaty with the Afghani government. The Soviet Union was reluctant to send troops into Afghanistan. The Soviet Government had reason to believe that a Mujahideen government in Afghanistan would ally itself with the United States and thus jeopardize its border security. It therefore invaded to prevent such an outcome. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Mujahideen took control of the country and instituted strict Islamic rule. This fundamentalist government would become known as the Taliban, a transition ignored by the texts.

### *U.S. Support for Saddam Hussein*

The U.S. Government had a long history of supporting Saddam Hussein and his government. It even supplied him with materials for his biological weapons program. A fact omitted by the texts. There is evidence to suggest that the United States encouraged Iraq to launch its ten year war with Iran. There is evidence to suggest that the U.S. gave Saddam a "green light" for his invasion of Kuwait. Saddam's invasion of Kuwait had to do, in part, with a



long standing border dispute. All three texts present the invasion as simply an unprovoked oil grab. There is some evidence to suggest that the U.S. encouraged Kuwait not to settle the Iraqi dispute.

The three texts suggest Iraq was interested in invading Saudi Arabia yet offer no evidence to support such a claim. Saudi Arabia had been under the U.S. security umbrella for years, yet the texts never mention this. The text never give an account as to how U.S. troops came to be stationed in Saudi Arabia, a crucial omission as it led to Osama bin Laden's disillusionment with the United States. There is evidence to suggest that the U.S. government lied to the Saudi's regarding Iraqi troop movements. There is no mention in the texts about the public relations campaign that demonized Saddam Hussein to garner popular support of the Gulf War. The texts never put into context the historic scale of U.S. operations in the Gulf. Osama bin Laden's complaints against the U.S. are never explained or analyzed. The texts refuse to report that the Taliban demanded evidence of bin Laden's guilt and the Bush administration refused to offer it. Bin Laden was never charged for the crimes of 9/11. A fact the texts omit.

#### Comparison of Major Findings to Previous Research

Just as Gunn (2006) found that none of the texts he examined addressed Vietnam's century's long struggle for independence, a necessity for understanding Vietcong ideology, this study reveals the neglect of the three texts to examine Osama bin Laden's earlier association with U.S. foreign policy and the history behind his later Fatwa complaints. Thus, bin Laden's ideology remains a mystery to the reader. Leavy (2007) argued that the failure of the media to challenge the "agenda setting government narrative" of 9/11 lead the public to accept an "official story" that went on to create a "depoliticized collective memory." Indeed, this work found that at no time did any of the three texts under study stray from, or challenge, stated government

narratives. It is therefore likely that the texts are complicit keeping the collective memory of 9/11 “depoliticized.” This work corroborates Hess and Stoddard’s 2011 study which found that all nine textbooks they scrutinized fell short in discussing the ethic and political origins of the 9/11 terrorists or the motive for their attack. Also, just as Hess and Stoddard found inconsistent definitions of the word “terrorism” in their texts, this work found the same.

### Limitations/Gaps in the Study

It must be understood that this research only considered three textbooks. It is quite possible that a multitude of narratives that challenge the findings of this work exist in other texts marketed for high school history students. If the above assertion is true, the researcher believes these narratives would most likely be found in texts edited for Advanced Placement classes.

### Overall Significance of the Study

Most credentialed history teachers currently working in this nation’s schools were born before the Soviets left Afghanistan and the U.S. stationed troops in Saudi Arabia. All should have a working memory of September Eleventh and the past eleven years of war. Unlike the majority of historical events sandwiched between the covers of contemporary high school history texts, this war continues to unfold on our watch. Perhaps we can forgive our colleagues who, in 2001, had no response to George W. Bush’s State of the Union question, “Why do they hate us?” and so let stand his answer to his own question: “They hate our freedoms” (Bush, G.W., 2001, September 20). But for how long? How long is it acceptable for those of us who labor in the academic arena to leave unchallenged contemporary explanations of complex historical events given by those who are in power to martial the nation’s resources to respond those events? If nothing else, this work should serve as a reminder that we won’t find the answer by spending thousands of dollars on a classroom set of high school history textbooks. As intellectuals it is

our responsibility, our duty, to challenge these flawed narratives of our recent past, and do it in a timely enough manner so that we may empower our students and ourselves to affect the outcome of the narratives yet to be written. In the words of President George H.W. Bush we must declare, “This will not stand, this flawed narrative of events; not on our watch; this will not stand.”

#### About the Author

Michael Galli earned his BA in History from California State University Chico in 1995. In 2003 he earned a teaching credential from Humboldt State University. He currently serves as the Dean of Students and Humanities instructor at Rivendell Academy in Orford New Hampshire, the first public pre K-12 interstate school district in the nation. He lives in Vermont.

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